


VERMONT  
- MAIDHESTER -  
HILLTOP

1 OF 2

DEVELOP (24)

OTHER STATES

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# Other States

## Vermont Hildene (1)

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the  
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

# NEWS from FRIENDS of HILDENE

Vol. 1, No. 1

December, 1976

Editor's Note: This is the first issue of a periodic newsletter that will be sent to the membership of Friends of Hildene, Inc. FOH has been incorporated in order to acquire Hildene, the "ancestral home" of Robert Todd Lincoln and make of it an educational-cultural center for the Northshire, and a memorial to the Lincolns and the Beckwiths.

## ROBERT TODD LINCOLN BECKWITH ACCEPTS HONORARY CHAIRMANSHIP OF FOH. . .

Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, great-grandson of Abraham Lincoln and brother of the late Mary Lincoln "Peg" Beckwith, has agreed to become Honorary Chairman of Friends of Hildene. In a letter dated September 17, 1976, Mr. Beckwith wrote that he would be honored to accept the position, and he continued: "It is good to know that one has so many good friends working so hard to make ones sister's dream possible." It was Miss Beckwith's wish in her Will that Hildene be preserved and maintained as a memorial to her grandparents.

## HARD BARGAINING WITH THE CHURCH. . .

Negotiations between Friends of Hildene and officers of the Christian Science Church leading towards FOH's acquisition of Hildene are continuing. FOH president Robert Schmid and counsel Arthur O'Dea Jr. talked at length with senior representatives of the Church at the new Christian Science Center administration building in Boston on September 10. Since then, at the request of the Church, FOH submitted a detailed legal brief concerning the property and the Will, following which there has been an exchange of letters and a telephone conference. The Church has expressed its hope that FOH will be able to acquire the property, and FOH trustees are confident that an agreement will ultimately be reached on the purchase price. This may not occur until after the first of the year, however.

## NATION-WIDE FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN IS PLANNED. . .

Trustees met on November 30 with Robert Simonds, Vice President of Ketchum, Inc., one of the country's leading fund-raising firms, who came to Manchester to explain the process of mounting a national campaign for funds. Mr. Simonds congratulated the Trustees for beginning to work on financial planning well in advance of the actual acquisition of the property, and he described the kinds of data and information that would be needed in preparation for a fund drive. In addition to funds for purchasing the estate, the trustees are determined to acquire capital and operating funds large enough to assure a lively educational-cultural program at Hildene, and one that is financially stable. As one trustee put it, "We want Hildene to be an active, living memorial!"



## NATIONAL FOUNDATIONS INTERESTED IN HILDENE. . .

Presentation have been made by the trustees to four national foundations, and all have expressed an interest in FOH's effort to preserve Hildene. The president of the Eva Gebhard-Gourgaud Foundation, after reviewing the photographs and program material sent to him, has written that his directors will consider the FOH application at their December, 1976 meeting. Grant funds from this source would be used to hire archivists, book specialists, and other professionals to sort out, evaluate, and arrange the books, documents, and memorabilia in Hildene for optimum museum display. Funds may also be available to sponsor a conference of Lincoln scholars in the main house in the late Spring of 1977.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, whose regional office is in Boston, has been asked by the church to give its counsel on how best to use Hildene as a memorial, and its Preservation Officer, Miss Kathryn Welch, spent the entire morning of November 15, going through the mansion itself as well as the grounds and River Road buildings. She in turn drew Hildene to the attention of Michael Dennis, of the Nature Conservancy regional office in Boston, who, on his visit, was particularly interested in the lower pasture area, the wetlands, and the Battenkill.

Finally, a presentation of photographs and documents has just been sent to the Vermont State Division of Historic Preservation at the request of its director, Mr. John Pinney, who wishes to evaluate Hildene for a possible inclusion in the State and National Register of Historic Places. This evaluation will be carried out by Ms. Jane McLuckie. Inclusion on the National Register is not only a matter of prestige; listed institutions are eligible for 50 per cent funding of renovation costs by the Federal government. Further contact with foundations will be made as time permits, both before and after the acquisition of the property.

## MEMBERS, TRUSTEES, AND OFFICERS. . .

As of December 1, FOH had accepted 80 members, a rapid rise from the hardy band of 25 founding members who signed up at the organizational meeting on August 23, 1976. Since the organizational meeting, the full membership has been convened only once, and the meeting was sparsely attended. The trustees, however, will have met nine times as of December 1. Trustees, elected by the membership, are: Ken Hill, Susan Hill, Oscar Johnson, Romi Perkins, Carl Saladino, Robert Schmid, Robert Thum, John West, William Whitman. Officers elected by the trustees, are: Mr. Schmid, president; Mr. Johnson, vice-president; Mrs. Hill, secretary; and Mr. Thum, treasurer.

## FOH IS TAX EXEMPT. . .

Friends of Hildene submitted its application for exemption from Federal Taxes in September. A request for further documentation was received ten days later to which we responded promptly, and on October 22, we received the official letter from the Internal Revenue Service certifying that contributions to FOH are tax-deductible under Section 501 (c) (3) of the federal tax code. This phenomenally quick

result is due first to the highly competent drafting of the application by our counsel, Mr. O'Dea, but also, we feel, to the fact that our educational, civic, and preservational objectives are just those that tax exemption was designed for.

#### THE MAIN HOUSE IS IN GOOD CONDITION. . .

Contrary to rumors and early reports, the Hildene mansion is in a good state of repair. Trustees Ken Hill and Oscar Johnson have undertaken to explore the need for physical restoration, and their initial reports are most encouraging. For example, the Vermont State Electrical Inspector for the region, after a basement-to-attic tour, concluded that Hildene could be opened to the public "tomorrow" since only very minor work should be needed to comply with the State electrical code. Another professional visitor has commented that except for water damage to the ceiling in the dining room, the interior of the mansion for the most part needs nothing more than "paint and polish". Finally, the Northeast section of the roof, which was scheduled for repair earlier, was re-shingled in October, using materials that Miss Beckwith had ordered before her death. Trustee Hill prevailed on the executors of the estate to get the work done before winter set in. (The Hill family is also in charge of patrolling the estate and of other security measures.)

#### HOW CAN THE BIG HOUSE BE USED?. . .

The trustees are actively debating a variety of ideas on how to make Hildene a living memorial to the Lincolns and Beckwiths. There is basic agreement on two points; First, the house will be open to local people and out-of-towners alike as a memorial-museum in which the books, documents, furnishings and memorabilia of the Robert Todd Lincoln family and descendants will be displayed. Second, the house will be available to the community for meetings, recitals, symposia, lectures, and other social events. There will be an admission fee for tourists and rental fees for group events, the proceeds to be used to defray maintenance and upkeep costs.

Beyond these two basic ideas--and including them--any and all constructive suggestions will be welcomed by the officers and trustees. A major open question concerns the agricultural lands and buildings. Shall we try to have a farm program of some kind? If so, what? Trustee discussions to date with County Extension Agent John Page have elicited doubts about the possibility of a dairy operation but guarded optimism about other types of farming. Members of FOH and their friends have an opportunity here directly to influence the important program decisions that have to be made in the near future. Write us a letter! What kind of happenings do you think should be going on at a revived Hildene?

#### A WORD ABOUT FINANCES. . .

All FOH members who receive this newsletter are fully paid up until August, 1977, and our treasurer has no claim on them. But the



fact is that we are going to have to pay some bills, and we shall need more money than we have. Our expenses are modest but cumulative, for postage, telephone, secretarial help, and supplies. Please contribute what you can to keep us afloat until, with the acquisition of the property, a full scale fund campaign is launched. Above all, sign up your friends and relatives as members of FOH. What better Christmas present? Use the form below and let us hear from you!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Annual Membership

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check to:

Friends of Hildene, Inc.  
Manchester  
Vermont 05254

Individual. . . . .	\$ 5.
Family. . . . .	15.
Business and. . . . .	
Organizational . . . . .	25.
Sustaining. . . . .	50.
Contributing. . . . .	100.
Patron. . . . .	500.

Contributions to FOH are tax-deductible.



Box 781  
Manchester VT

# NAL

Manchester's and the Northshire's newspaper

Manchester Center, Vermont

August 26, 1976

15 Cents

## "Friends of Hildene" incorporate

It has been a little over a month since Carl B. Rechner, development consultant for the Christian Science Church in Boston met with citizens of the community and offered them 90 days to develop a plan to purchase "Hildene" the 412 acre Manchester estate of the late Mary Lincoln Beckwith.

Since that meeting on July 22 a group which calls itself "Friends of Hildene" has formed and on Monday evening, August 23, voted articles of incorporation, by-laws and elected a board of trustees and officers.

"Hildene", built in 1904, was the home of Robert Todd Lincoln, the only son of President Abraham Lincoln to live to maturity. His granddaughter, Mary Lincoln Beckwith, died July 10, 1975 leaving the property to the Christian Science Church with the wish that it be preserved as a memorial to her grandfather and grandmother. The Church, however, does not operate memorials, cannot use the estate, and will put it up for sale for any legitimate use if the community is unable to finance its purchase as a non-profit memorial.

About 25 persons attended the meeting Monday night in the Manchester town office and joined "Friends of Hildene" with payment of a \$5 membership fee.

After voting on the articles of incorporation and the by-laws, which had been drawn by attorney

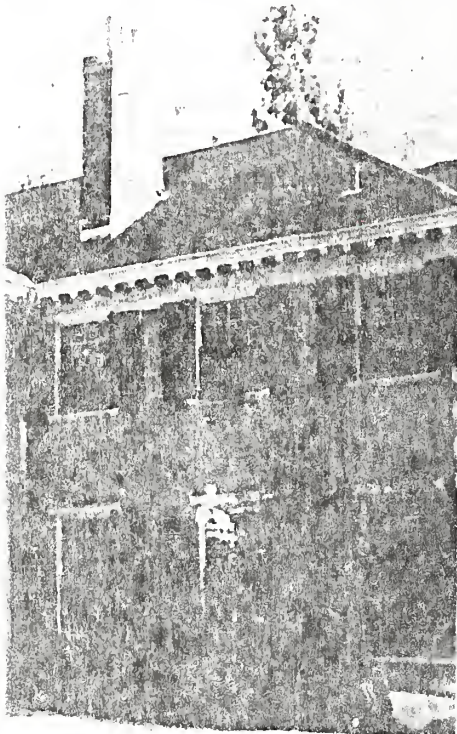
Arthur O'Dea, and heard that the organization is seeking tax exempt status, the group elected a nine member board of trustees. Elected to the board were: Oscar Johnson, Robert C. Schmid, Kenneth F. Hill, Robert Thum, William J. Whitman, Mrs. Romi Perkins, John H. West, Carl Saladino and Mrs. Susan Hill. In an executive session the board named Schmid, president; Thum, treasurer; and Mrs. Hill, secretary.

"The axe that hangs over our heads," said Schmid, "is the 90 days to raise a half million dollars. We will need a few large pledges." "Hildene" has been appraised at \$612,000 which includes the main house and contents, two farmhouses, a carriage house and farm tools.

In the weeks to come the board will do a feasibility study of what can be done with the property, set up a fund raising committee, prepare a brochure and contact the news media.

Tuesday morning following the meeting Johnson phoned church officials to let them know that Friends of Hildene had incorporated. While it is hoped that the church might grant an extension to the 90 day deadline, it is by no means certain at this time.

The next general membership meeting is set for Wednesday, September 8 at 7:30 p.m. in the Manchester town office.



SARACCO Photo

t a local group is seeking ways to Lincoln.

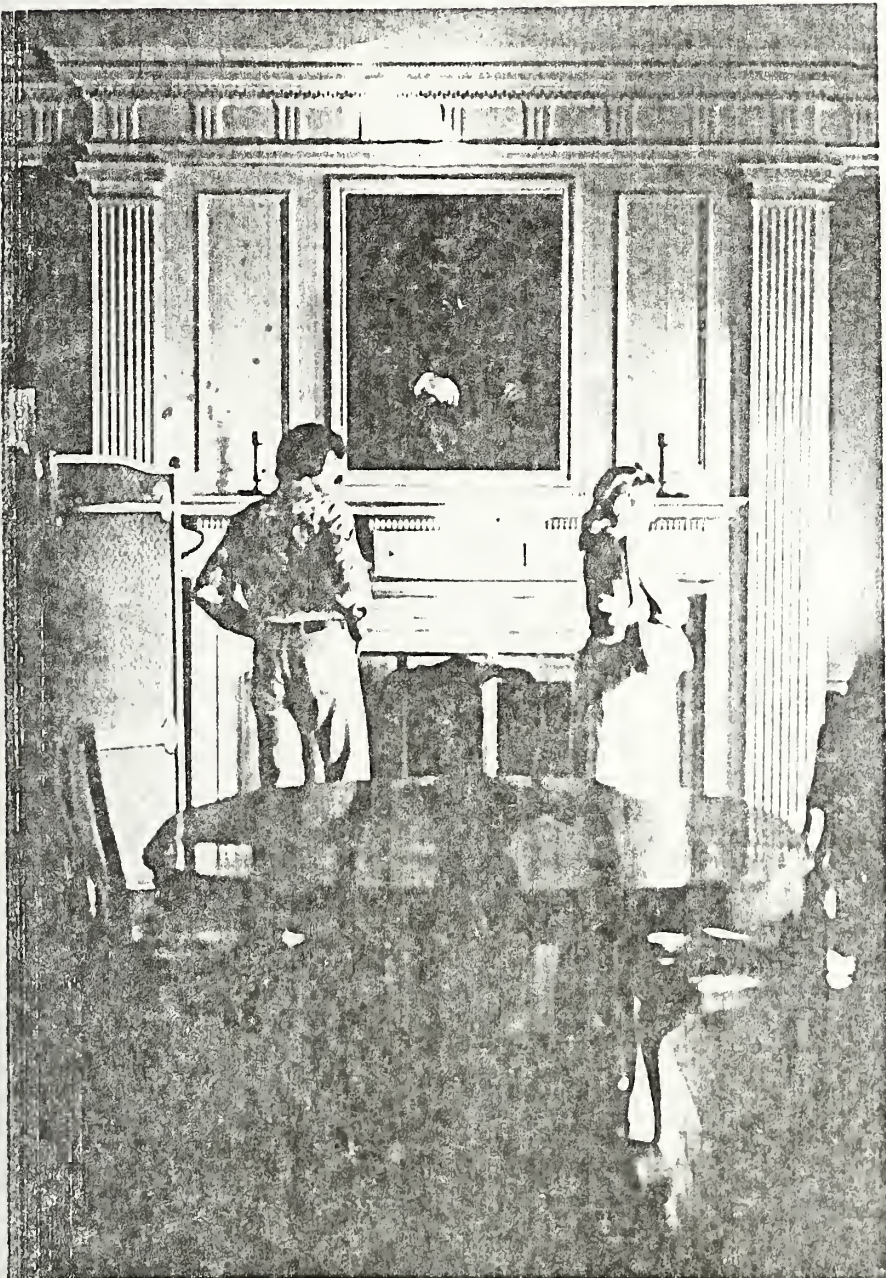
## ack on the tracks, ip through Manchester

committee had ear... rized... tions on July 1 from Burlington to Bellows Falls via Rutland and



Robert Todd Lincoln Portrait  
in Dining Room

Hildene







Parlor and dining room with ceiling damage  
(Robert Todd Lincoln portrait)

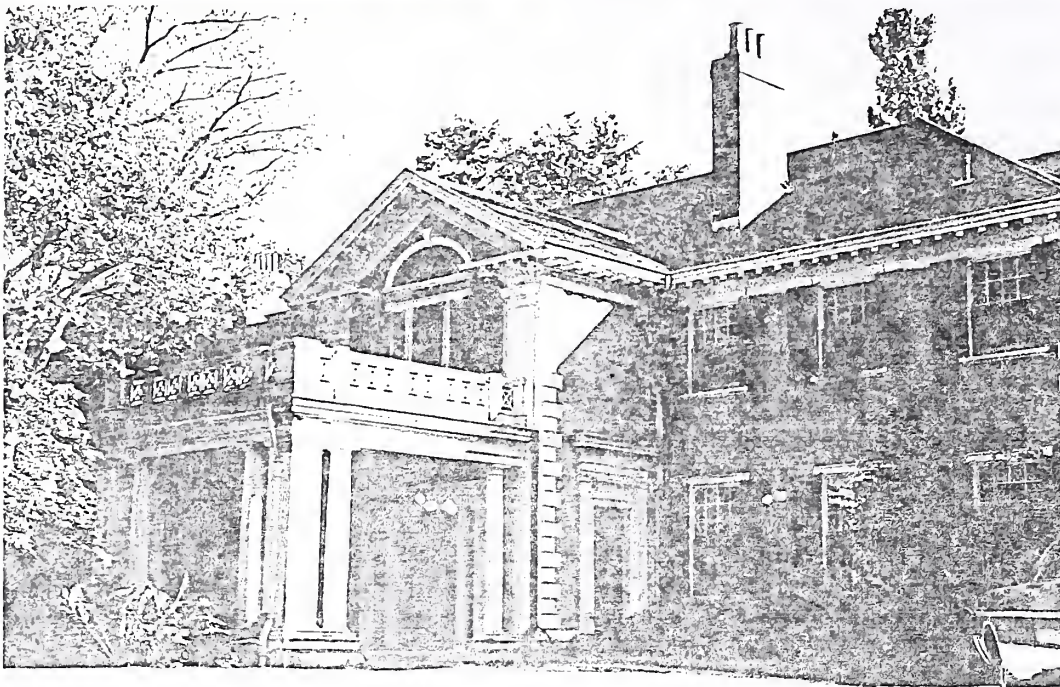
Hildene



South West facade, from garden



Hildene



Martha and the Salt Pond



# Beckwith accepts honorary chairmanship of Friends of Hildene

Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, great-grandson of Abraham Lincoln has agreed to become Honorary Chairman of the Friends of Hildene. In accepting the chairmanship, he wrote, "It is good to know that one has so many good friends working so hard to make ones sister's dream possible."

"Hildene," built in 1904, was the home of Robert Todd Lincoln, the president's only son to live to maturity. The 412 acre estate remained into the family until 1975 when Mary Lincoln Beckwith died leaving it to the Christian Science Church to be maintained as a memorial to her grandparents.

The Friends of Hildene sprang into being when the Christian Science Church offered to sell the property to the citizens of Manchester if they could organize a non-profit group capable of purchasing and managing it.

The estate is appraised at \$612,000, however, the Church has suggested that the purchase price would be substantially reduced in favor of such a local association devoted to preserving the estate as a memorial in

conformance with Miss Beckwith's will.

FOH president Robert Schmid and counsel Arthur O'Dea Jr., have talked at length to church representatives and are confident that agreement on a purchase price will be reached, according to a newsletter sent this week to the membership.

FOH received its tax-exempt status in October and plans for mounting a national fund raising campaign are underway. On November 30, FOH trustees met with Robert Simonds, vice president of the fund raising firm of Ketchum, Inc. to advise them of the kind of data needed in preparation of a fund drive. The trustees, according to the newsletter are determined to acquire capital and operating funds large enough to assure a financially stable educational-cultural program at Hildene.

Four national foundations have expressed interest in preserving Hildene.

The directors of the Eva Gebhard-Gourgand Foundation will consider this month an application for a grant to be used to

(Continued on Page 13)

## Beckwith

(Continued from Page 1)

hire archivists and book specialists to arrange books, documents and memorabilia in Hildene for museum display.

Kathryn Welch of the National Trust for Historic Preservation spent a morning going through the main house and over the property and drew it to the attention of Michael Dennis of the Nature Conservancy regional office in Boston who was particularly interested in the lower pasture area, the wetlands and the Battenkill.

Finally, a presentation of photographs and documents has been sent to John Pinney at the Vermont State Division of Historic Preservation who will evaluate Hildene for possible inclusion in the State and National Register of Historic Places. Institutions listed in the National Register may be eligible for 50% federal funding for renovation cost.

Hildene is in excellent repair and, according to a Vermont State Electrical Inspector, needs only minor work to comply with the state electrical code. For the most part the mansion needs little more than paint and polish.

The trustees are actively debating ideas to make Hildene a living memorial to the Lincolns and the Beckwiths. The building would be open to local people and tourists as a memorial-museum and would also be available for meetings, recitals and social events. A question still open is how to use the farming lands and buildings and the trustees welcome suggestions.

Membership to FOH has grown from 25 in August to 80 as of December. Names are Ken Hill and Johnson,

Roni Perkins, Carl Saladino, Robert Schmid, Robert Thum, John West and William Whitman. Officers are Schmid, president; Johnson, vice president; Mrs. Hill, secretary; and Thum, treasurer. New members are welcome and FOH is seeking funds to cover postage, telephone and secretarial expenses.

## Selectmen

(Continued from Page 1)

Purpose of the authorization: To allow the Selectmen to enter into contracts with new or expanding businesses to fix and maintain real property taxes for a specified time. The adopted broad policy for present and future Boards of Selectmen involves collaboration between the Board, other town officials, banks, and state and federal organizations, to determine an applicant's financial status with a view toward fixing and maintaining the valuation of the applicant's property for a period not to exceed five years.

The Board discussed with Planning Commission Chairman F. A. Bongartz the upcoming hearing on Amendments to the Zoning Laws and reviewed Zoning permits granted by the Zoning Board as required during the interim between the Notice and any zoning changes.

The Board voted to pay Jennison Engineering Co. \$16,000 for the company's work for the town and accepted the firm's offer to absorb the cost overrun of \$1100.



FRIENDS OF HILDENE: Statement of Purpose

*education* The Friends of Hildene have come together to secure, for the use and enjoyment of the public, the historic "Hildene" estate in Manchester, Vermont, that was the home of Robert Todd Lincoln, the only son of Abraham Lincoln to live to maturity.

F.O.H.'s goals are the following:

a. To preserve Hildene intact by purchasing it under the favorable conditions that the Christian Science Church, the owner of the property, is offering to encourage the formation of a community based, non-profit association.

b. To retain and restore to their original station in the Hildene mansion the Lincoln furniture, books and memorabilia, and to acquire such other historical artifacts of the Lincoln family as friends or members of the family may wish to donate.

c. To carry out, initially, only such indispensable repairs on the Hildene residence itself as to permit its being opened to the public at the earliest possible date - preferable June, 1977.

d. To engage an individual, or perhaps a family, to serve as custodian-curator-guide and to establish, within the main house or in an outbuilding, year-round accommodations for said individual or family. *Comprehensive Education & Training Act. (free labor)*

e. To open the estate to visitors from May 1st to October 15th at fees to be established, including special rates for groups, for school children, and for young people and the elderly.

*Town Mgr. Henry Lambert*  
*MRTOME*

*(Mr. Thom Green skirt)*

*Bob Schmidt Church Mr. Pitner*

*Bill's last name - Whitman*

*Mary Thompson (maid)*



f. To engage professional counsel on how best to operate an historical site as a tourist attraction with the aim <sup>assisting to make</sup> ~~of making~~ the enterprise financially self-sustaining.

g. To acquire a modest backlog of endowment funds beyond those needed to purchase the property by means of:

1. Local, State and National fund raising efforts.

*Memberships* 2. Selling or leasing such marginal portions of the property as can be tastefully developed and used (or left as natural open spaces) without detracting from the dignity of Hildene as a Lincoln memorial.

h. In order to carry out these goals, to incorporate Friends of Hildene as a tax-exempt non-profit educational corporation under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

①. To waive all or part of its exemption from local property taxes, in order not to become a burden to the local taxpayers, unless the latter vote otherwise.

j. To pursue these goals energetically, but if its efforts fail to create an economically viable Lincoln memorial enterprise; to cut its losses promptly and disband, turning over any assets to an appropriate private or governmental agency, as the federal tax law requires.

8/9/76



## HILDENE - BRIEF HISTORY



The 412 acre property that became Hildene was assembled at the turn of the century by Robert Todd Lincoln, who was fifty years old at the time. President of the famous Pullmann Car Company, once Secretary of War and then Ambassador to Great Britain, Robert Lincoln first visited Manchester in 1863, when he was 20 years old, traveling with his mother and Mrs. Abner Doubleday and staying at the Equinox House. He returned to the area many times, and decades later his friend and law partner, Edward S. Isham, interested Mr. Lincoln in settling here. Part of Mr. Isham's estate, familiar to local people still as "Ormsby Hill", was incorporated into the neighboring Hildene domain.

Mr. Lincoln lived during much of every year at Hildene until his death there in 1926. After his wife's death in 1937, his daughter, Mary Lincoln Isham (whose home in Manchester is now the "1811 House") lived briefly in Hildene, followed in 1939 by Mr. Lincoln's second daughter, Jessie Lincoln Randolph, who lived there with her daughter Mary Lincoln Beckwith. Miss Beckwith, known to several generations of family and friends as "Peg", took over the estate in the early forties and lived there until her death in July, 1975.

Hildene was left to the Christian Science Church in Miss Beckwith's will, with the hope that the "big house" and its gardens be preserved as a memorial to her mother and grandparents. If the Church could not maintain the estate as a memorial, however, it was authorized to sell the property. This it is now proceeding to do, but it has offered to set a low selling price for the property - appraised at \$612,000.00 - if a non-profit citizen's group is organized to take it over. Otherwise, the land and buildings will have to be sold on the open market, and much of it, in the heart of Manchester Village, would be attractive to

developers for sub-division into three acre lots or, if Zoning Variances allowed, into high density cluster or condominium housing.



Wed 8<sup>th</sup> of Sept  
7:30

August 18, 1976

Suggestions for the successful acquisition of Hildene by FOHENS OF HILDENE

These suggestions are humbly submitted by Robert D. Thum

1. A good lawyer should be retained by FOH to incorporate the body, to check the legality of its Statement of Purpose, and to see that it complies with all Federal and State statutes as a tax-exempt non-profit educational corporation.
2. This lawyer, as with all other professional and non-professional workers should be impressed with the importance of (hopefully) donation of fees or charging the minimum amount in the interest of getting this project off the ground with the minimum of costs involved.
3. A board of governors (officers) administrators should be set up in the process of incorporation.
4. To spread the workload, a person (or persons) should be put in charge of the following projects:
  - a. Publicity. This person, skilled in this art, should constantly keep the media informed of the progress of FOH, and keep the project alive in the minds and thoughts of the citizenry of this area.
  - b. Feasibility study. Since it has been pretty well ascertained that the Real Estate group of Christian Science Church spent a minimum of time on this project, a group should be formed to undertake this most important aspect of our endeavor. This group should be headed by a reliable and conscientious realtor who can appraise properties accurately and give the group a reliable guideline as to how to proceed on the selling off of properties that are not needed for the historical identification and showing of this property.
  - c. Repair and maintenance study. This study should be made immediately so that FOH will know what has to be done to keep the structure structurally sound, what interior renovation should be done, the condition of wiring and heating plants, etc. Much renovation, of course, can be done in stages. Cost estimates should be submitted for the various phases of work, along with comments as to availability of labor and/or materials being donated or furnished at cost by community workmen and supply stores.
  - d. Custodian services. This study should include the availability and cost of custodial services and the logical family location for such a custodian.
  - e. Fund raising. This committee should examine all possible Foundation support possibilities at National, State, and Corporate levels. An appraisal must be made by persons familiar with the local area to determine the extent of local contributions of large, medium, and small size.
  - f. Operation. Study should be made of similar institutions as to how they are funded, the costs of their operations, custodial services, insurances, etc.



- h. Historical. An accurate and interesting brochure of the history of Robert Lincoln and Mildene should be prepared and an estimate made by a printing company as to the cost of reproducing it for sale to visitors. This, of course, should be coordinated with the study of admission fees at similar historical sites to determine the income possibilities to offset costs.
- i. Communication. An accurate roster of interested parties should be prepared for immediate circulation. A newsletter should be circulated at least weekly to FOH acquainting them with current happenings and keeping interest from flagging. Phone calls should be made to encourage attendance at meetings, which, incidentally, should be kept relatively short and of maximum interest. Interested groups should be permitted to be shown through the Estate at convenient times to stimulate their interest and (hopefully) work and money support. This could be done with the aid of the local historical societies.
- j. Weekly meetings should be held with reports from the various heads of the above mentioned projects. A deadline of October 1 should be set to submit a detailed proposal to Mr Campbell, lawyer for the Estate for the acquisition of the property.
- k. If the feasibility study and repair and maintenance and other studies show that it is infeasible to continue on without substantial fund raising, a finance group should immediately convene to study an alternate proposal of bond funding and mortgage obtained from the Church or local banks. Perhaps this duty could be incorporated in the Fund Raising committee as a secondary condition, so we will not be caught flatfooted if we find we cannot raise anywhere near the amount of money needed to pursue this project in a financial practical manner.

I urge the Friends of Mildene to study this list of suggestions seriously, as I have found from previous experience that time moves rapidly, and only by dint of serious and hardworking volunteers - and a lot of them - and hardnosed administration - does a project of this cost and magnitude get off the ground successfully. I believe it is time for much more action.

Robert D. Thum  
Morse Hill Rd.  
Dorset, Vermont



----- CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP -----

Friends of Hildene, Inc.

*Rossie R. [unclear]*

RECEIPT is hereby acknowledged of a donation in the sum  
of ~~five~~ <sup>ten</sup> Dollars, which donation is made for the  
cultural and educational purposes of Friends of Hildene, Inc., a  
non-profit corporation. It is hereby certified that the above  
named donor is a member of Friends of Hildene, Inc., a Vermont  
corporation duly constituted under the laws of the State of  
Vermont.

Friends of Hildene, Inc.

by *Robert [unclear]*

# NEWS FROM HISTORIC HILDENE



VOL. 3 NO. 1

MANCHESTER, VERMONT

AUTUMN 1978

## GOVERNOR SNELLING OPENS HILDENE TO THE PUBLIC FOR 'PRE-RENOVATION' TOURS

When Governor Richard Snelling cuts the traditional ribbon at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, September 18, Historic Hildene will open its doors for the first time to the admission paying public. Tours of the main house will be offered daily, for approximately 30 days during the 1978 foliage season, in the afternoons only, between 1 and 4 p.m. The admission fee will be \$1 per adult, 50 cents per child (14 and under) and \$3 per family. Members of Friends of Hildene, Inc., pay no fee.

"We are calling these 'Pre-Renovation' tours," says David Sheldon, Hildene's executive director, "because we want people to realize that they will be seeing the house more or less as we found it, and before our extensive program of renovation begins. The low admission fee reflects this 'Pre-Renovation' condition".

Hildene was formally dedicated as a community resource at ceremonies on August 5, since which time nearly 1500 persons have toured the main house and grounds. But these tours have been available only to the 850 Charter Members of Friends of Hildene and their families. The foliage-season house tours beginning September 18 will be the first glimpse the general public will ever have had of the estate that Robert Todd Lincoln built in 1904 and called his "ancestral home".

Governor Snelling is scheduled to arrive at Hildene at approximately 4 p.m. on September 18, with the brief ceremony slated for 4:30. The public is cordially invited to attend, and those who wish to be among the first admission-paying visitors to Hildene will be accommodated after the ceremony until 6 p.m. on that day only. From Tuesday, September 19 until October 15 the first tour will begin at 1 p.m. and the last tour will start at 4 p.m. Tours will be conducted by volunteer guides. Visitors will also be invited to try out the estate's new nature trails, also open to the public for the first time. (See "Nature Trails" item, this issue.)

## FOH MEMBERS ELECT NEW TRUSTEES AT SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

Two new Trustees were elected by the membership at the second annual meeting of Friends of Hildene, Inc. on August 30, and announcement was made of the addition of five new names to the Hildene Advisory Board. The new Trustees, both of whom have served until now on the Advisory Board, are Judith M. (Mrs. Frederick) Taylor and Henry B. van Loon, both of Dorset. The new members of the Advisory Board are John Chapin, John Kennedy, Clint Lewis, Marshall Peck and Malcolm Cooper, all of Manchester.

Mrs. Taylor graduated from and is a member of the board of trustees of Burr and Burton Seminary. She is known for her enthusiastic participation in many branches of the civic and community life of the Northshire. Henry "Hank" van Loon's current profession is architecture, but his earlier careers included the fields of economics and planning as well. The remaining seven members of the Board of Trustees are Jean Bischoff, Oscar Johnson, Gerald Keneally, Arthur J. O'Dea, Romi Perkins, Robert Schmid, and Robert Thum.

The Hildene Advisory Board, formed in June to assist the Board of Trustees, now has twelve members. Of the four newly-appointed men, John Chapin is a Manchester Townlift Committeeman and State Finance Chairman of the Vermont Republican Party; John Kennedy is assistant vice president of the Rutland Savings Bank and manager of its Manchester Branch; Clint Lewis is owner and manager of the popular Jelly Mill in Manchester; and Marshall Peck is editor and publisher of the Vermont News Guide, Malcolm Cooper is owner of J.K. Adams in Dorset. Already serving on the Advisory Board are Stig Albertsson, Mary Bort, the Rev. Jerome Hevey, Jr., Tony Perry, John Trethaway, Gerald Wilcox and Dr. Hsley S. Zecher.

## DEDICATION DAY

### CAPS SUCCESSFUL CHARTER MEMBERS CAMPAIGN

When the civil war cannon boomed at 12 o'clock noon on Saturday, August 5 to usher in Hildene's "noble second career" more than 300 well-wishers were arrayed in the formal gardens to mark the day. It was Hildene's Dedication Day, and before the weary staff of 27 volunteers closed the gates at 5 p.m. more than 700 Charter members and their families had taken the first formal house tours offered by FOH. Two hundred more took the tour on each of the two following days, giving a total of 1100 for the three-day Dedication week-end.

The big day was the climax of a month-long campaign for charter members that was both a financial and a recruiting success. More than 600 new members were entered on the Charter rolls in that month, and their contributions came to a rousing \$12,000. It was an auspicious beginning in every way!

## NEW ADDITIONS TO HILDENE COLLECTION OF LINCOLN MEMORABILIA

The donation to Historic Hildene of additional items for its Lincoln memorabilia collection and of furnishings for the main house has been announced by Hildene's executive director. "We are announcing these early donations," David Sheldon says, "not only because of their intrinsic interest but also because we want to encourage other such donations. We will be glad to hear from anyone who would like to donate 19th century antique furniture or objects connected in anyway with the life and times of Robert Todd Lincoln and his family. The restored main house will make a fine showcase for period furnishings and furniture.

Among the memorabilia are four lithographs and two framed silhouettes, all of President Abraham Lincoln. Robert Lincoln's father. These were given by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Glidden, visitors from Wilbraham, Mass., who brought them to Hildene on Dedication Day. Just before that, Judge Margaret Dougherty enhanced Hildene's Lincoln collection by the gift of a bank check made out and signed by Abraham Lincoln in 1859.

Another item of Lincolniana was received a few days ago. It is a Tiffany serving tray, in sterling silver, decorated with raised figures of small animals. Presented to a little girl, it is inscribed "From her god mother Mary Lincoln Isham." Mrs. Charles Isham was Robert Todd Lincoln's older daughter who established a home in Manchester (now the "1811 House") one year after her father moved into Hildene. The Isham's son Lincoln Isham was a resident of Dorset until his death in 1971.

Sheldon also announced the donation to Hildene of several sets of draperies, some with box valances, from Mrs. Stig Albertsson. Historic Hildene, he pointed out, is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation, and all gifts made to it are fully deductible for federal income tax purposes. In the case of gifts in kind, such as those described above, Sheldon's office has the items appraised and informs the donors of the value of the gift for tax purposes. The Hildene office is open from nine to five p.m. Monday through Friday and the telephone number is 802-362-1788.

## FOREST LORE AND NORTHSHIRE GEOLOGY ON HILDENE'S NATURE TRAILS

When Governor Snelling cuts the "trails" ribbon on September 18 he will open to the public the first two loops in what will one day be a complete network of Hildene's nature trails. Of the two trails now ready, one is about half a mile in length, requiring perhaps twenty minutes of easy walking. The second covers a mile and a half; it winds half-way down to the River Road and then climbs back up to the Hildene gardens, and it is classified "moderately strenuous." Both offer surprising insights into the geology as well as the forest-lore of the region. The trails were designed and made by Hildene's Youth Service workers headed by Leal Mertes. The professional planning was done by Jim White, County Forester; Larry Pratt, County Soil Conservationist; and John Pratt, also a USDA soil conservationist.



## THE VOLUNTEER'S CORNER

Volunteer's Log Book - all of our volunteers are asked to register in our new Log Book which is kept at the reception desk. Please record time spent at Hildene — or at home — working for Historic Hildene. We need this record for two reasons: it helps us with our presentation to foundations to be able to show a goodly amount of volunteer support, and, in addition, we will want to recognize you at the proper time.

So, please sign the log. Those of you who already have hours from Dedication Day, etc., please register those.

Our Thanks to several persons who have given extra effort during our first few weeks: BILL HARVEY, owner of FEET FIRST in Manchester Center, who has served as our official photographer; ED MILLS, who has set up our accounting system and is helping our staff keep a good set of books; THE MANCHESTER GARDEN CLUB, their quick action in doing some garden work made our Dedication Day much more pleasant.

VOLUNTEER TOUR GUIDES are being trained for foliage season tours this fall and for our grand opening to the public in 1979. If you are interested, please call Judy Taylor (867-5318), Jane MacEllven (362-1127) or Diane Talcott (362-2767). They will explain what is involved in joining this elite group.

## TO SPEED HILDENE'S RESTORATION: BECOME A MEMBER!

Fortunately, the main house at Hildene is in excellent condition structurally. But the interior decor needs to be completely renewed — from floor to ceiling. And much of the furniture and furnishings — almost all purchased by the Lincolns at the turn of the century — needs recovering, refinishing, repair, and in some cases replacement.

One of the best ways we know to pay for this essential restoration work — which will be supervised by an experienced preservation architect — is to enroll new members in Friends of Hildene. Many of those who receive this newsletter are already Charter Members of FOH. But some are not, and we hope they will join us.

And you who are members can upgrade your memberships, persuade your friends to join us, and send us the names of potential contributing members.

FOH membership means free tours of Hildene each year; an invitation to the annual members' dinner; a vote at the annual meeting; and unlimited access to Hildene's nature trails, forests, and wetlands. But most of all, membership in Friends of Hildene means your support for high quality, careful, and sensitive restoration work!

---

Yes! I want to help restore Historic **HILDENE!** Enclosed is my TAX DEDUCTIBLE membership contribution of:

Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$5,000. or more
Benefactor	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$1,000.
Patron	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 500.
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 100.
Sustaining	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 50.
Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 25.
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO **FRIENDS of HILDENE, INC.**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

AND MAIL TO MANCHESTER, VERMONT 05254

Mr. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Director  
Lewis N. Warren Bancroft Museum  
1300 So. Clinton St.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46801

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Robert Todd Lincoln's  
HILDENE

## IS THERE A MUSIC-LOVING BENEFACTOR OUT THERE?

Because so many of the 1500 visitors who have toured the main house to date have asked whether the pipe organ in the center hall will be renovated, Hildene staff have looked into the matter. The answer, according to one of New England's most talented specialists in organ renovation, is that the Aeolian instrument at Hildene is very valuable, is in fundamentally sound condition, and can be restored perfectly at a cost of no more than \$6,000.

Robert Todd Lincoln signed a contract on July 31, 1908 with The Aeolian Company of New York City for the construction of this two-manual and pedalboard residential pipe organ. It contains 17 stops, and the 17 ranks of pipes — almost 1000 pipes in all — are housed in two intricately spindled cabinets on the stair landing of the main hall. The console is in the first floor foyer, with the blower mechanism in a special room in the basement. The console is equipped with a Duo-Art music roll mechanism, and there are some two hundred player rolls. The existing pipe work is in excellent condition, but work has to be done on the chest and reservoir leathers, the blower mechanism, electrical contacts, and the player roll unit. Mr. Lincoln paid \$11,500 for the organ in 1908, and it is estimated that an instrument of comparable size and quality would cost at least \$50,000 to \$75,000 today.

Will Hildene's halls once more vibrate to the sound of Robert Lincoln's pipe organ? The FOH trustees hope so, but Hildene's annual budget for restoration will not be able to accommodate the organ project for at least five years. If this rare Aeolian instrument is to regain its voice soon, there must be an inspired Friend of Hildene who volunteers to donate the necessary \$6,000.

The talented organ restorer lives near Manchester and is available to do the work this winter.

## IS THERE A MUSIC-LOVING BENEFACTOR OUT THERE?

ATTENTION, CHARTER MEMBERS . . . your name will appear on our charter member scroll in the lobby as it appears on the outside of this Newsletter. If there is a correction, call 362-1788 by September 25th.

NEW FROM HISTORIC HILDENE is the quarterly newsletter of Friends of Hildene, Inc., Manchester, Vermont, 05254. Telephone (802) 362-1788. FOH has as its purpose the preservation of Hildene's open lands and the restoration of its buildings so that the estate can be made available to the public as an educational and cultural resource and as a memorial to Robert Todd Lincoln and his family. A special section of the "Manchester Journal" published on Dedication Day contains much detailed information on Hildene and the Lincolns who lived there, including recent photographs. Single copies are available, free, on request.

SCHEDULE OF TOURS: From September 18 through October 15, tours available afternoons only, from 1 to 4 p.m. FOH members free. Other, including guests of members, \$1 per adult, 50 cents per child (14 and under) \$3 per family. Closed September 30th.



# NEWS FROM HISTORIC HILDENE



VOL. 3 NO. 2

MANCHESTER, VERMONT

WINTER 1978/79

## RESTORATION PRIORITIES AND REOPENING TARGET DATE SET

After a series of free-for-all discussions, the main priorities for restoration work and the target date for the first 1979 showing of Historic Hildene to the visiting public have now been set. The trustees, advisors, staff, and principal consultant are agreed 1) that the Main House will be the focal point of restoration in 1978-79; 2) that the Carriage Barn will receive the next largest allocation of restoration money; and 3) that every effort will be made to complete the first phase of restoration and refurbishing in time to reopen Hildene to the public early in the summer of 1979.

Detailed plans and schedules within this broad program will be worked out with the assistance of preservation architect Maximilian Ferro, who will be FOH's principal technical consultant for restoration work. This will begin in the next few weeks, when announcement is expected of a matching grant to FOH from the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation. Max Ferro is president of the Preservation Partnership, Inc., and comes to us warmly recommended by other professionals in the field and by representatives of funding agencies.

Tentative restoration plans within the Main House call for the restoration of Robert Lincoln's bedroom on the ground floor (which had been used by his grand-daughter as a gun-room and photography workroom) and the refurbishing of Lincoln's adjoining study, or library, a room that had been left almost literally untouched since his death in 1926. In addition, Hildene's two pantries, the servants' dining room, the butler's bedroom, and the kitchen, all on the main floor, are expected to be ready for showing to tourists, even if restoration on them is only partially complete by opening day.

Exterior work on the Main House will center on the entrance, where the portico roof will probably have to be replaced, and several of the Georgian revival pillars repaired. The stucco exterior is in excellent condition, but the trim and shutters will be touched up. Several large trees, crowding too close to the house, have already been removed, and some repair to the copper gutters will be needed.

For the 1978 foliage season tours, the Studio-Annex, next to the Main House, was hastily adapted as a temporary visitors center. Our experience with this small space showed that a much larger structure would be needed for receiving large numbers of visitors, and the decision was made to adapt the Carriage Barn, some 400 feet west of the Main House, as the permanent visitors center. This will contain a "museum exhibit" introducing visitors to the story of the descendants of Abraham Lincoln - almost all of whom at one time or another lived in Hildene - and telling them a little of what they can expect to see when they tour the house. There will be a gift shop also, probably in the restored stable area, and possibly some kind of limited food or snack service. Tickets for the house tour will be sold here, and visitors will proceed by foot to the Main House.

Encroaching trees and shrubs will be removed from the immediate proximity of the Carriage Barn so that the handsome building itself will be on display. Visitors and tour bus parking will be secluded in the adjoining woods so that vehicles will not be visible from the Main House. The entire exterior of the Carriage Barn will be painted; one section of damaged roof and eaves will be repaired.

"The net result of all these changes," according to David Sheldon, FOH Executive Director, "will be a Hildene visit that is substantially improved over what we were able to offer during our trial run tourist season this fall. *Continued - see RESTORATION on back page*

## ENCOURAGING RESULTS OF EXPERIMENTAL FOLIAGE-SEASON HOUSE TOURS

The Main House at Hildene was opened to the public for the first time in September in an experiment to gauge public response to the estate as an historic site. Hildene's trustees are highly pleased with both the number of visitors passing through the house during the foliage-season trial and with the enthusiastic comments made by most of them. During the 27 days the house was open, a total of 1,810 persons visited Hildene, including 1,535 who paid and 275 Charter Members, who are admitted free. Fees for these experimental tours, which were advertised as "pre-restoration" visits, since no work had been done on the rooms at that time, were deliberately set low: \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children.

"We are confident, on the basis of this trial run, that Hildene will in a very short time establish itself as a major port of call for the thousands of visitors who come to Manchester during Vermont's extended tourist season," David Sheldon, FOH executive director, said recently. "We had minimal publicity before opening: a few newspaper notices and some flyers distributed to local motels. Yet we attracted an average of 67 visitors every day, almost 60 per cent of them from out of state. We suspect that our key problem is not going to be that of attracting visitors but that of gearing up in time to handle a very large volume of tourist traffic next summer."

Results of questionnaires returned by 53 of the visitors give some interesting vital statistics: Two-thirds were female, and 80 per cent were 35 years or older. Sixty-eight per cent suggested an admission fee of \$2 or more. When asked what specifically prompted them to visit Hildene, 16 per cent mentioned their interest in "anything that has to do with the Lincoln family," while another 32 per cent professed a general interest in American history, and 42 per cent just liked to visit old homes that have been restored. Historic Hildene, obviously, fits all three of these categories of interest very well. ■

## OUR RESTORATION "WISH LIST" FOR 1978-79

- Could you make one of these dreams come true? Please write, call us at Hildene (362-1788), or talk to one of our Trustees or Advisors. Thank you.
- **THE ROBERT TODD LINCOLN BEDROOM** - The private bedroom on the first floor just to the right of the entry hall needs to be restored as it appeared in 1926 when Robert Lincoln passed away in the early morning hours of July 26th - just six days before his 83rd birthday. Total restoration, including furniture: \$7,000.
- **ORAL HISTORY** - Some 93 persons who had personal contact with the Robert Lincolns are still living and their remembrances are invaluable. Taped interviews with these folks, later transferred to a type manuscript, will not only produce an historical record for use in interpreting the life and times of the early 1900's at Hildene, but will also be a great help in restoration. To hire a person trained in the emerging art of oral history, and do a complete job: \$5,000.
- **PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY** - Several hundred negatives found at Hildene need to be developed; the resulting photos and other already on hand need to be mounted, identified, and preserved. Many need to be prepared for display. There have been some real surprises in the photos we now have - unknown treasures may be uncovered in those negatives. The complete task, according to our best estimate, will cost \$1,700.
- **INTERPRETIVE BROCHURE** - We need to tell our story - and one of the best ways will be through a multi-color interpretive brochure depicting the story of Historic Hildene. A quality product, done professionally, will cost us \$900.
- **FLAGPOLE AND SET OF FLAGS** - The United States flag and the Vermont State flag will be flown daily at Hildene. A sturdy flagpole and a set of 4 flags will run about \$370.
- **PUNCH BOWL SET** - We will be doing some entertaining, having receptions, and at least once a year hold an Open House for all local citizens. We could use a real nice set complete with 50 or more cups. Is there one in your attic?
- **PARKING LOT** - Not a very glamorous gift, but we could sure use it. We no longer will use the front lawn of the Main House for parking: the Trustees have decided that it should be restored to its turn-of-the-century beauty. Our new parking lot will be secluded in a tree-lined area some 400 feet west of the Main House adjacent to our Visitors Center. We are already consulting with the experts and will be ready to construct it as soon as we can in the spring. However, this is the one major place where restoration funds from the Department of the Interior cannot be used. Somewhere we have to come up with: \$5,000.
- **SLIDE PRESENTATION** - To show our anticipated 15,000 visitors in 1979 a brief history of the development of the Hildene estate, we need to put together an attractive slide show. We may take 200 slides to get the 40 we need for the presentation - plus we need a script, narration, etc. \$800.
- **TEA SERVICE** - For two uses - to have on display on the Hildene tea cart in the dining room, and to use when we have a tea! What we have in mind is the beautiful antique tea service that you hardly ever use and is so hard to keep polished.
- **VEHICLE, WITH PLOW** - There are a lot of roads to plow on our 412 acres - and a lot of jobs that need the services of a truck. The two old ones that came with the property are ready to collapse. The vehicle we have picked out, with a nice snow blade, less a trade-in for our two old trucks: \$6,000. ■ *REMEMBER - ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO HILDENE ARE FULLY TAX DEDUCTIBLE.*

## HILDENE BOOK COLLECTIONS YIELD SURPRISES

Treasures and puzzlements are some of the things being uncovered in the book collections of Robert Todd Lincoln and his wife Mary Harlan Lincoln as Lois Barney, our volunteer librarian, begins examining and cataloging the several thousand volumes found in the study, the parlor, and elsewhere in the Main House at Hildene. Mrs. Barney, certified last year as a public librarian by the Vermont State Department of Libraries, is spending many hours every week at work on the books, with the frequent reward of an unexpected discovery.

Just after her work began, for example, while checking a leather-bound set of the complete works of Thomas Hardy, she found an envelope inside the front cover of one of them. In the envelope was a personal letter in the handwriting of none other than Thomas Hardy, declining an offer to appear at a publisher's luncheon. Under the heading of puzzles is the presence, prominently displayed in the bookcase in the parlor, of a handsomely bound set containing no fewer than 27 volumes written by a man neither Mrs. Barney nor any of the rest of us at Hildene had ever heard of: Walter Besant. Perhaps readers of this newsletter will be able to suggest why the Lincolns might have been particularly interested in the novels and other writings of Mr. Besant.

Once the books have been catalogued and inventoried, an appraiser will be brought in, and Hildene Trustees will begin deciding about their disposition. Some of the rarer volumes will probably be made available to Lincoln scholars for historical research at Hildene. ■

## THE VOLUNTEER'S CORNER

The pages in our Volunteer's Log Book continue to fill. More and more good friends are taking on responsibilities as we move into this winter's restoration period. Our appreciation, of course, to our faithful docents (that's the proper name for a tour guide): JANE MacELLEN, MARY ROESING, JUDY TAYLOR, SHEILA FOSTER, ROBERT THUM, CHARLOTTE BROOKS, MARY SCHMID, CLAIRE SCHOFFSTALL, DIANA TALCOTT, LOIS SHELTON, JOANN OAKLEY, and SUSAN BAUERS.

They did an outstanding job - and at a tea hosted by Judy Taylor on November 9th they shared their experiences with us!

The volunteer who has put in the most hours - a record that may be hard to match - is LOIS BARNEY, the professional librarian whose work is mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

Finally - if you have previously mentioned to us that you would like to volunteer some time at Hildene - we haven't forgotten you! You will be hearing from us by January 15th! We have 21 different categories in which we will need volunteer help! ■



## PRELIMINARY RESTORATION WORK BEGINS UNDER \$18,000 CETA GRANT

Work began in Mid-November on a six-to nine-month special program to rehabilitate the gardens and some of the buildings of the Hildene estate. The program is being funded by the Federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, CETA and the total wage bill allocated for the project is just under \$18,000. It will require nearly 5000 work-hours for completion, divided among four or five CETA workers, the first of whom is already on the job.

The focus of this special CETA-financed project, which will go on throughout the fall and winter months, is on opening the Hildene grounds and gardens to the public next year. (Restoration funds for work on the Main House will come from the matching grant funds of the Vermont State Division for Historic Preservation.) A start on public use of the grounds was made with the dedication of two nature trails on September 18th by Governor Richard Snelling. Several additional miles of nature and hiking trails are planned, according to Oscar Johnson, Hildene trustee and chairman of the buildings and grounds committee, and the new trails will include some that are "short and easy." In addition, preliminary plans call for four to six miles of cross-country ski trails (perhaps by 1979-80), and horseback riding trails on the 412 acre estate are also a possibility in the long run.

"This project was rated very highly by our CETA Advisory Council," said Thomas Holland, who heads the Champlain Valley Work and Training Center. "The program not only provides valuable training and employment opportunities for local people, but it gives a boost to the restoration of Hildene that will be of direct benefit to all the people of the Northshire."

The job openings are for two carpenter-painters, a trail developer, and one laborer. One position has already been filled, and candidates are being interviewed for the others. Carpenters and painters will work on outbuildings that can be used as centers for or otherwise support the outdoor trails system. Areas will be cleared for family picnics and outings, and all such amenities, it was stressed by both FOH and CETA, will be available to the public either without charge or for only a nominal fee. ■

## A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR CURMUDGEONS

All of us have at least one friend or acquaintance who has a heart of gold but just happens to be a curmudgeon. These are the kind of people who pretend they never heard of Friends of Hildene's membership drive. Or who, if you tell them how much FOH needs new members, to help pay for the restoration of the Main House or the Carriage Barn, will say "Humbug" and turn away. Hopeless, you may think.

But no! Friends of Hildene needs curmudgeons as well as nice people like you, our present members. And curmudgeons, in spite of the way they talk and act, like to be remembered at Christmas. What to give them? A gift membership in FOH!! That's the way to get them involved! Send us a check for a gift membership in the name of your favorite curmudgeon. We will send them - before the holidays if you act quickly enough - a note welcoming them as members of FOH and, unless you advise us to the contrary, telling them that you are the friend who made their membership possible.

Needless to say, we will also be happy to enroll your cheerful, non-curmudgeon friends, who are legion! Once they learn a bit about us, we feel that most of these people will become Patron members the next year, Benefactors the year following, and then LIFE members! And you will have done it all!

Incidentally, Christmas and Year's End is a good time to consider upgrading your own membership. Just think of it: by writing out a single check you can enroll a curmudgeon and gladden our hearts by raising your membership category a step or maybe two on the contributor ladder below. ■

YES! Please send a notice of my gift membership in Friends of Hildene to the person named below. While you are at it, and if my check allows it, and if I have so indicated, upgrade my membership too!

### GIFT MEMBERSHIP

- |                                       |                |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member  | \$5000 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor   | \$1000         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron       | \$ 500         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing | \$ 100         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining   | \$ 50          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family       | \$ 25          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual   | \$ 5 or more   |

### UPGRADE MY MEMBERSHIP

- |              |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Life Member  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Benefactor   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Patron       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sustaining   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Family       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Individual   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Send Gift Membership To: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER'S Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS TO FRIENDS OF HILDENE ARE FULLY TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

Mr. Mark E Neely, Jr, Director  
Louis A Warren Lincoln Museum  
1300 So. Clinton St.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46801

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Manchester, Vt.  
Permit No. 2



## Robert Todd Lincoln's HILDENE

### SET FOR FIRST HARVEST OF HILDENE TIMBER

Area loggers will bid in December for an estimated 90,000 board feet of timber to be sold in a selective cut in two sectors of Hildene's 250 acres of forest. The trees have been marked for cutting by County Foresters Jim White and Gerry Salmon with the assistance of trustees Johnson and Schmid, the latter serving as talleyemen.

The decision to make this selective harvest was made in October after a committee of trustees accompanied Jim White and Dave Barton, Chief Forester of the Bennington-Rutland region, on a tour of the entire forested acreage. It was agreed that trees would be cut only where their removal would not detract from the beauty of the grounds or of the views from the Main House. Also to be protected were the present and future nature trail areas. Given these criteria, the harvest areas turned out to be two unfrequented sections along the southern boundaries of the estate. The trees marked were predominately white pine, plus about 10,000 board feet of mixed hardwoods.

The harvest cut is the first step in a timber stand improvement program that will be carried out over the years, sequentially, with the advice of the County Foresters Office. This will include regular inspection for signs of disease in the trees; thinning in certain areas to relieve overcrowding; and use or sale of cull trees for fuel. Forester White pointed out that an invasion of blister rust, which had killed off a number of otherwise merchantable pine trees, could have been avoided if the woods had been given a professional check-up every year or so ■

#### RESTORATION (continued from front page)

Next summer visitors will be directed to a well-laid out parking area that will be partially shaded by tall trees. They will find an attractive visitors center with a gift shop and rest rooms. The visual displays in the historical exhibit will heighten their interest in the house tour to come, and the visit to the house itself will reveal several rooms restored and additional rooms added to the tour. We expect that the enthusiastic response of the public this past October will be repeated and surpassed by the reaction of our visitors next season."

In addition to the restoration work described above, most of which will be done with funds expected from the Historic Preservation Division's matching grant, other restoration projects will be under way, including, we hope, some of those described in our "Restoration Wish List". (See pg. 2) Taken together, these activities will produce a Hildene worthy of the confidence of the visiting public. With a little luck, according to Mr. Sheldon, the 1979 tourist season may find as many as 15,000 visitors walking the halls of Historic Hildene. We hope that many charter members of Friends of Hildene, Inc., will be in that number ■

### MORE MEMORABILIA DONATED

The following items have been donated to Hildene in the past 60 days - thank you! ● One slipper chair and two East-lake side chairs - Mr. & Mrs. Arthur J. Perrine ● Robert Lincoln memorabilia items - Ms. Imelda McNamara ● Envelope with note signed by Abraham Lincoln - Mr. Hudson Holland ● Framed Abraham Lincoln picture - Mr. & Mrs. Edward Clark ● Golf memorabilia - John Lombardy ● Two volumes pertinent to Hildene - William Coonley ● Lincoln Association Certificate - Rosann Smith ● News clipping memorabilia - Mrs. Murray Campbell.

NEWS FROM HISTORIC HILDENE is the quarterly newsletter of Friends of Hildene, Inc., Manchester, Vermont, 05254. Telephone (802) 362-1788. FOH has as its purpose the preservation of Hildene's open lands and the restoration of its buildings so that the estate can be made available to the public as an educational and cultural resource and as a memorial to Robert Todd Lincoln and his family.



# NEWS FROM HISTORIC HILDENE



VOL. 3 NO. 3

MANCHESTER, VERMONT

SPRING 1979

## MAJOR PRESERVATION GRANT UNDERWRITES RESTORATION OF HILDENE'S MAIN HOUSE AND CARRIAGE BARN

### CARRIAGE BARN TO BECOME HILDENE VISITORS CENTER

Anticipating a total of up to 15,000 visitors this summer, FOH trustees, volunteers, and staff are racing the calendar in order to be able to take care of them. Restoration of the Main House, described in the adjoining column, is one priority. But there are others. The Carriage Barn, for example, is being transformed into the Hildene Visitors Center, and the first step is to inventory and store the hundreds of pieces of farm equipment, tools and memorabilia the barn contains.

The huge carriage room and the adjoining stable wing are now cleared. The former will become a visitors' orientation and exhibit space, and the horse stalls and surrounding area will be refurbished and converted into a museum shop. Visitors' restrooms will be provided, including some to accommodate wheel chairs, and the wood paneling throughout the interior will be repaired and refinished.

For 1979 the exterior restoration plan calls for some roof work and a fresh coat of paint overall. Funds permitting, a new heating system will be installed to permit use of the Carriage Barn in the cold months; this may be a unit that burns wood as well as oil.

A logging road is being widened near the Carriage Barn to allow tour buses to unload and turn around, and the widened road will also provide parking space for visitors' cars. The lawn in front of the Main House will no longer be used for parking. Visitors will follow a gravel path from the Carriage Barn up to the Main House for tours.

WE CAN'T AFFORD A CARRIAGE . . . But we need one to display in Hildene's refurbished Carriage Barn-Visitors Center this summer. Ideally, we would like to show an elegant high-wheeled buggy such as the Lincolns might have used when they first moved into Hildene in 1905, as well as a classic touring car of the kind we know they drove on Manchester's dusty roads only a few years later. Is there a Friend of Hildene out there who could donate such a vehicle? Or lend one for display until we can get our own? Thousands of visitors would appreciate your generosity!

### ENTHUSIASTIC CROWDS, MANY ON SKIS, CELEBRATE LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY AT HILDENE

More than 600 men, women, and children, bundled up in parkas, ski caps and boots, came to Hildene on February 11 and 12 to celebrate the 170th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. They came as participants in a varied program of sports events, as spectators, and as visitors interested in the handsome turn-of-the-century

Lincoln's Birthday - continued on next page

### INTERIOR: MAIN HOUSE

Work began March 1 on the first stages of the restoration to be funded under a \$30,000 matching grant program approved by the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation. The Division will match with \$15,000 an equivalent amount to be raised by Friends of Hildene. Maximillian L. Ferro, the preservation architect in charge of the project, has completed detailed specifications of the work to be done, including that on the Carriage Barn (see adjoining column), and has submitted them to the Montpelier office for approval. The target date for completion is July 4, when Hildene is to be reopened to the public for the 1979 tourist season.

Focus of the restoration will be on the principal rooms in the Main House. Robert Lincoln's private first-floor bedroom, which last season was still being used as the Friends of Hildene office, will be completely restored. The furniture will include a carved bedstead which had originally been in that room but which had been removed to another building on the estate. The main hall and staircase, with its hundreds of spindles in four different carved designs — one fluted and three spirals of different patterns — will be repainted as will all the other main rooms. Original wallpaper will be cleaned where possible and in other cases replaced.

The scenic paper in the formal dining room is of the appliqué type popular in the early years of this century. The sky is a pale gray paper. Over that was applied the paper depicting mountains and meadows, and finally came the trees and shrubs in the foreground — three layers of wall paper in all. Mr. Ferro noted that this handsome paper is in fairly good condition except for a few water stains on the background sky, which he suggested be painted over, the painters going carefully around the profile of mountains and trees.

Special techniques will be used to clean the red velour drapes and the matching upholstered furniture in Robert Lincoln's study, which will be one of the showcase rooms on the tour. The Hildene kitchen, with its huge cast-iron coal range, will be shown as it was furnished prior to World War I, while the adjacent butler's pantry will be restored to the era of the late twenties. The butler's bedroom and the staff dining room, which were not included in the house tour last year, will also be refurbished and opened to the public. Floors throughout the house will be sanded, lightly stained and varnished as they were originally.

Many restoration tasks are being carried out by a fine staff working under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, (CETA). Some of this work is not readily visible but is nevertheless vital. For example: the scraping, sanding, pre-coating, sealing and painting of the green shutters. Hildene's Main House has 118 of them, many of which are equipped with chains that permit them to be opened and closed from inside.

Another challenging job tackled by the CETA workers consists

Main House - continued on last page

# TOY SOLDIERS, LAMP WICKS, BOOKS INVENTORIED BY HILDENE VOLUNTEERS

In the huge and varied tasks of restoring and renovating the Hildene buildings and grounds and making them available to visitors much reliance is being placed on volunteers. Many have already contributed valuable talent and time to the winter assignments of the past several months, and David Sheldon, executive director of Friends of Hildene, will be glad to welcome others from the Manchester community for the busier season ahead.

One of the more challenging and interesting projects is the preparation of an inventory of the thousands of items — from furniture to photographs, tomes to toys, skis to sewing boxes — which three generations of the Lincoln family had accumulated during their occupancy. Beginning with Robert Todd Lincoln and his wife, Mary Harlan Lincoln, who moved here in June, 1905, through the lives of their daughters, Mary Isham and Jessie Beckwith Randolph, and finally the grand-daughter, Mary Lincoln (Peggy) Beckwith, who died in 1975, the memorabilia represent seventy years of family living. The collection also extends back into the life of Robert's father, President Abraham Lincoln, and therefore affords, to a degree, glimpses of the lives of four generations of Lincolns.

The "search, preserve and record" team, more formally the inventory team, is composed of four volunteers, with Judy Livingston, a skilled "preservationist", as chairman. Others of the group are Shirley Kennedy, Liz Kuhn and Beverly Frank. Considering the fact that there are 80 rooms and closets in the main house scattered from basement to attic, and that in addition there are 26 other buildings on the 412-acre estate, with objects of value and interest in nearly every one of them, the project taken on by this team is of vast and sometimes frustrating dimensions.

"Much of the job is really like cleaning house, with a lot of closets, and then sorting and cataloguing things," explained Mrs. Livingston. Then she laughed. "Many of us feel we ought to be doing the same thing in our own homes. But we've made interesting finds, like little perfume bottles imported from Paris, and boxes of wicks for emergency kerosene lamps. And nearly every room had a sewing box in it. The women must have sewed back every button as soon as it dropped off. And laundry lists."

The entire attic, at this writing, has already been cleaned and all of the items sorted by category. The assortment ranges from a dress-maker's form, exhibiting the modish turn-of-the-century silhouette, to tin Melachrino cigarette boxes and a beautiful collection of Robert Lincoln's lead toy soldiers, many of them of the Civil War period. In one corner is a stack of rocking chairs in varying states of repair. Where possible these will be restored to their original "rockability."

In the bedrooms on the second floor are dozens of other items, including furniture used by Peggy Beckwith. Some of this must be re-upholstered, as it is a bit the worse for having been exposed to the antics of her dogs and of a pet raccoon that used to crawl in from a tree outside the window.

The capacious linen closet has an entire wall of well-fitted drawers. Found in one drawer was a box of rose-shaped birthday cake candleholders, the box labeled for Robert Lincoln's 67th birthday. There were also several boxes of pink candles from F.O.A. Schwartz, the famous toy store.

There are hundreds of photographs, including many of President Lincoln and some of Robert Lincoln playing with his grandchildren. In one room are a number of Peggy Beckwith's paintings. Her hobbies are represented in part by a pair of skis, and the parachute she strapped on when she flew her own open-cockpit plane from the estate's private landing field down by the Battenkill.

Another dedicated volunteer is Lois Barney, who is sorting and cataloguing some 5,000 books at Hildene. Among these are a set of thick, red-bound volumes of 57 years of the Congressional Record, which for many years was called the Congressional Globe. Dating from around the middle of the 19th Century and therefore doubtless containing some of the few speeches Abraham Lincoln made during his term in Congress, the volumes came originally from the library of Robert Lincoln's father-in-law, Senator James Harlan of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. Stored for decades in the little red schoolhouse which still stands on the River Road section of Hildene, they have been brought to the Main House, cleaned, catalogued and made ready for display.

Of special interest in this era of the women's movement, though hardly in the category of ERA campaign literature, are four little leather-bound, gold-edged volumes by a writer identified only as "Mrs. Jameson." Two, published in 1840, are titled "Memoirs of Celebrated Female Sovereigns," and the other two, published in 1858, are "Moral, Poetical and Historical Characteristics of Women." Each volume bears the fly-leaf signature of "Mary Lincoln," Abraham Lincoln's wife.

In the inventorying procedure each item is identified with a code number indicating the building and room it was found in and where it is to be housed, as well as the date of cataloguing. A label is affixed to each article and a master-registration book will record a full description, the source if obtained from a donor, and other pertinent data.

During the February Lincoln's birthday celebration volunteers played key roles in organizing and conducting sports events and in greeting and registering the visitors. Among them were John and Joy Trethaway, "Kim" Kimball, Roger Lohr, Arnold and Danny Hill. Many more will be needed during the spring and summer months, particularly as tour guides and as clerks or cashiers in the gift shop. Those interested in enlisting for volunteer assignments should get in touch with David Sheldon, executive director, at Manchester, Vermont, 05254, or by telephone at (802) 362-1788.

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Lincoln's Birthday - continued from page 1

home of the Great Emancipator's oldest son, Robert Todd Lincoln. This was the first time it had been open to the public since last August's dedication period. The large turn-out was particularly gratifying to the Friends of Hildene officers and staff in view of the sub-zero weather that prevailed on both days. The grounds were deep in snow, but the mile-long drive through the woods from U.S. 7 had been cleared and ample parking space provided.

The festival began on Sunday, the 11th, with cross country skiing over a trail which had been completed and opened to the public for the rest of the snow season. There were also a snow-shoe race, jogging, and a golf-ball driving competition with red and green balls. Red-nosed contestants lined up for every one of the events and all received certificates of participation. Special prizes donated by local merchants were awarded the winners.

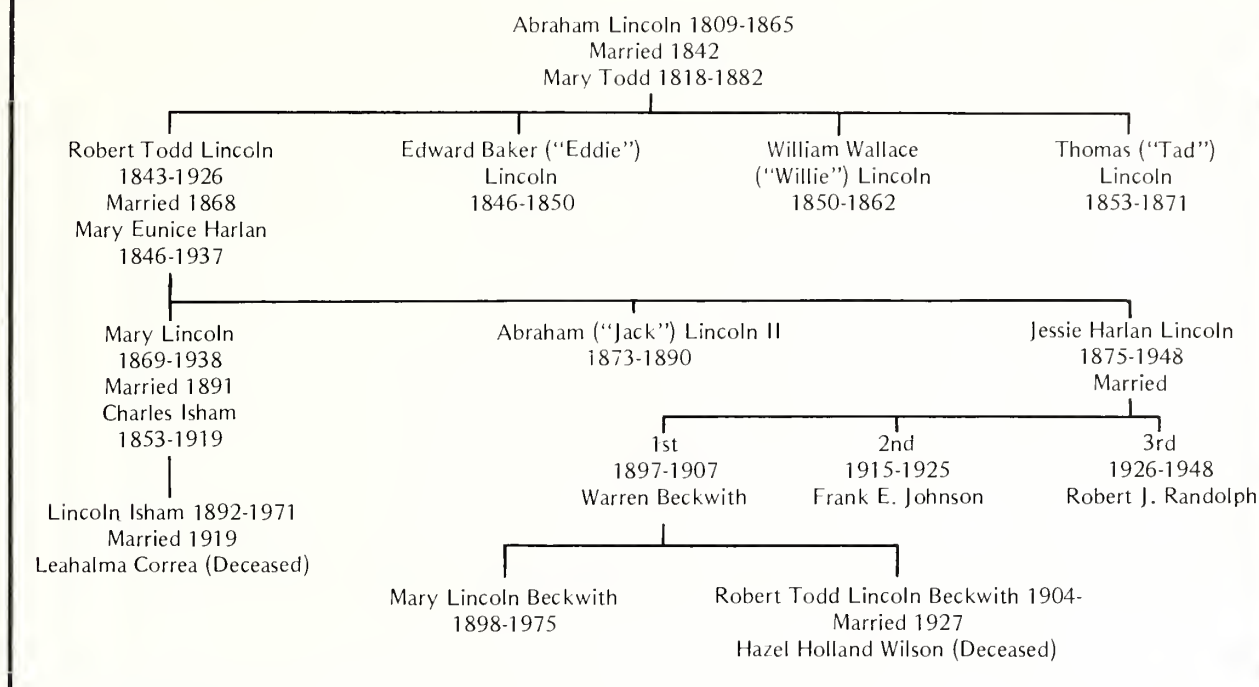
Winter golf was quite in the tradition of Robert Lincoln himself. He was such an avid golfer that he not only played regularly on the nearby Ekwanok course during the summer in Manchester but also braved less temperate weather. In Chicago, Lincoln and several of his friends played 18 holes on New Year's Day, 1906, in bitter cold and knee-deep snow, using red balls. As a result of the exposure, one of the foursome, Marshall Field, contracted pneumonia from which he died sixteen days later. Lincoln also became ill, spending several months recovering in the warmer climate of Georgia. At this writing none of the 1979 Hildene golfers has been reported as suffering any such ill effects.

During the afternoons of both February 11th and 12th the main downstairs rooms of the house were open to visitors, who expressed much interest in the estate's Lincoln memorabilia, including several items which had just been donated to Hildene and some that had been

continued on next page



## Direct Descendants of President Lincoln



*Courtesy of: Illinois State Historical Society*

## WILL SOME "ANGELS" OUT THERE FUND OUR ORAL HISTORY PROJECT?

What is Oral History? It is a bright-eyed lady—84 years old—telling how she sold tickets to Robert Todd Lincoln for the Saturday night "theatricals" at the Equinox House Ballroom . . . or it is Manchester's 1913 Snow Queen, nearly 90 now, recalling how Mr. Lincoln asked her to embroider his name on an "autograph cloth" to be auctioned at a charity ball . . . or the kid who broke a window in 1906, grinning as he remembers how "awfully mad" Mr. Lincoln became when he discovered the damage . . .

The history of Hildene and of Manchester since the turn of the century is imbedded in the memories of hundreds of lively and articulate elderly citizens in the Northshire and beyond who need no more than an invitation and the loan of a cassette recorder to persuade them to put it all down on tape. But time is taking its toll of these untapped historians, and precious vignettes of the past are being lost for good. In spite of the dozens of other priorities in fund raising that beset us, we feel that we must launch an energetic oral history project as soon as possible.

The project will require time and organization, and it will require some money - we estimate \$5,000. A project director with professional experience in carrying out oral history programs will have to be paid for several months work, and there will be equipment expenses, travel and transcribing costs, and in some cases honoraria to the narrators. Is there a history-minded friend out there who will contribute the funds we need to get started on Hildene-Manchester's oral history recordings and transcriptions this summer?

**Lincoln's Birthday - continued from preceding page**

lent for this event. There were many photographs of Abraham Lincoln and members of the family, letters, documents, and a few articles of clothing. Notable among the latter was one of the stove-pipe hats in which the Civil War president was often pictured; this item, which is the property of Mr. Fred Whittemore, was on loan from the Dorset Historical Society. The objects were displayed in the room that had been Robert Lincoln's study. Robert Thum, treasurer of Friends of Hildene, and Judy Taylor, a trustee, gave a running commentary on the exhibits as well as anecdotes from the lips of Robert Todd Lincoln and others of the family, including Mary Lincoln (Peggy) Beckwith, his granddaughter, who occupied Hildene from the late 1930's until her death in 1975.

Professional and amateur photographers clicked their shutters during the festival and the resulting photos were entered in a contest judged the following month, with prizes for the best picture.

Finally on Monday evening, February 12, a hundred persons (all that could be seated in the main hall and adjacent rooms of Hildene) enjoyed a dramatic presentation titled, "An Evening with Robert Todd Lincoln," by Steven Lee Carson, a Lincoln scholar from Washington, D.C. Mr. Carson played the role of Robert Lincoln holding a sedate (but wholly imaginary) press conference for the benefit of local people the evening before he died. (Mr. Lincoln was found dead in his bed on the morning of July 26, 1926, just a week before his 83rd birthday, August 1.)

Some of the Lincoln buffs among the birthday celebrants remarked upon the contrast between this setting — the elegant and opulent mansion Robert Lincoln had occupied as a summer home from 1905 until his death — and the little Globe Tavern, in Springfield, Illinois, where he was born in 1843. His parents rented rooms there during the first year of their marriage. The 24 room Hildene contrasted even more sharply, of course, with the humble birthplace of Robert's father, the dirt-floored cabin with one door and one window, in northern Kentucky. The Hildene mansion is, indeed, a strange architectural bridge across the Lincoln family generations, not, of course, reaching back to Abraham Lincoln's own beginnings, but still symbolizing the incredible changes that have occurred in many American families. And yet one could almost imagine, on these cold February days in the middle of a Vermont winter, a certain rugged resemblance between the snow-blanketed woods of Hildene and the forest-fringed farm country of Kentucky and southern Indiana where Abe spend his young years, before he moved to Illinois. One listened for the sharp thwack of a powerful axe or the sound of maul and wedge splitting logs into fence rails.

The enthusiastic reception that greeted this 1979 Lincoln's Birthday observance in Manchester left little doubt that this celebration will become an annual event at Hildene.

Mr. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Director  
Louis A. Warren Lincoln Museum  
1300 So. Clinton St.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46801

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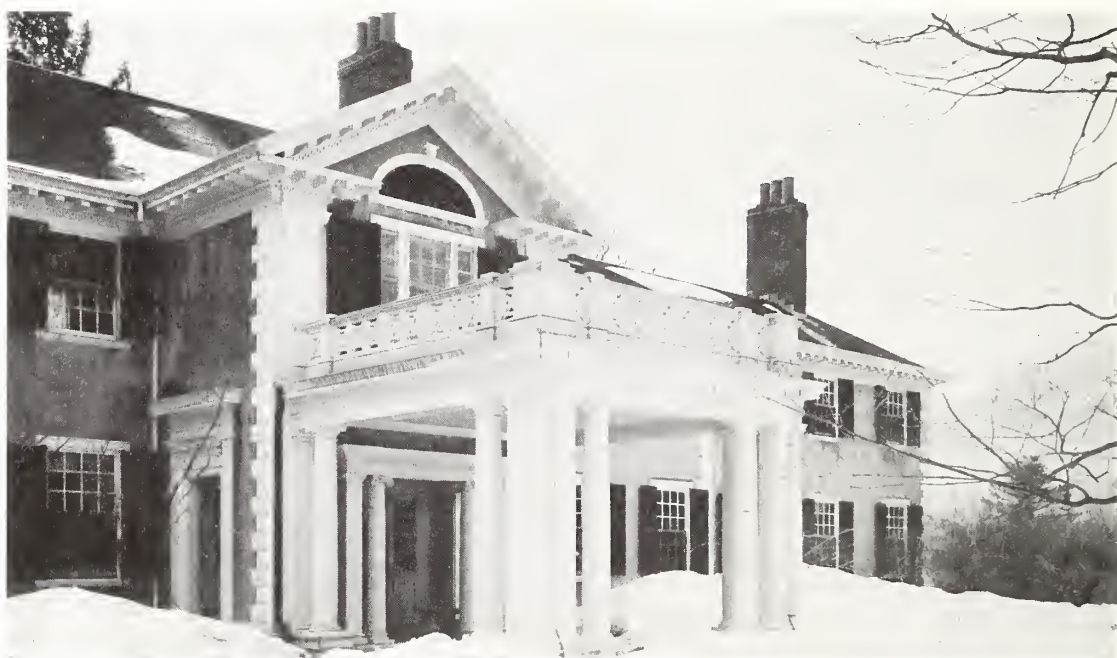


## HILDENE Robert Todd Lincoln's

### HILDENE IN MID WINTER

Winner of 1979  
Lincoln's Birthday

Photo Contest: Professional Class,  
David Thum



Main House - continued from 1st page

of the 81 doors in the Main House. Most of them stick or are otherwise ill-fitting and therefore need work. A total of 650 keys were found in the house. A thorough going inventory and lock-and-key trial has revealed keys that fit no locks and locks that have no keys. Happily, however, there are *some* matches.

This spring's restoration work is just the first phase of a program that will extend over the next three or four years, as funds become available. In the meantime, separate campaigns will be undertaken for special projects such as the restoration of the pipe organ in the Main House, Robert Lincoln's astronomical observatory, and the 1836 one-room schoolhouse on River Road.

Mr. Ferro, who has visited Hildene repeatedly to consult with trustees and staff in planning the restoration work, is an adjunct professor in graduate preservation studies at Boston University and the University of Vermont. He obtained his architecture degree at McGill University in 1966, and after serving as resident architect for the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities he formed his own firm, The Preservation Partnership, in 1977.

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Steven M. Spencer, editor,  
David C. Sheldon, executive director

ORIENTAL RUGS, ANYONE? Old photographs show that the Lincolns used their burnished floors in Hildene's hall, parlor, and dining room to set off the beauty of about a dozen medium-to-large-sized oriental rugs. Most of these rugs were still in use when Friends of Hildene acquired the house in 1978, but they are so worn and faded that they no longer can be shown. We will be most grateful to any Friend of Hildene who can donate one or more oriental rugs to replace the originals, once the floors are gleaming again. The rugs will not be walked on. They will be placed outside of the traffic pattern of the tours.



# NEWS FROM HISTORIC HILDENE



VOL. 3 NO. 4

MANCHESTER, VERMONT

SUMMER 1979

## GARDENS AND WOODLAND WALKS WILL BECKON VISITORS

One of the great charms of Hildene is its magnificent setting, a wooded hilltop with views of Mount Equinox and the Taconic range on one side, the Green Mountains beyond the valley of the Battenkill on the other. And surrounding the residence in all directions are 250 acres of forest, containing twenty-six species of trees.

Visitors are able not only to enjoy these scenic elements for their sheer beauty but to learn more about them from an unusually informative "Guide to Hildene's Nature Trails," prepared for use along two well-marked walks through the woods.

Other outdoor attractions awaiting Hildene's guests this summer are the formal gardens, now being restored to the appearance they are believed to have presented in the early 1900s. Members of the garden clubs of Manchester and Arlington have been contributing time, talent and funds to this project.

The nature trails, dedicated when Hildene had a preliminary opening last fall, are largely the work of Leal Anne Kerry Mertes, a biology and geology student at Stanford University. A resident of Lawrence, Kansas, Leal was visiting her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. James Fisher, of West Rupert, last summer when she was recruited for the trail project under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Much valuable help was given n her by Jim White, Bennington County Forester, Larry Pratt, County Soil Conservationist, and John Pratt, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture office in Rutland. Leal is an experienced hiker and backpacker, and this summer is doing geology research in the mountains of Nevada.

Hildene has two marked trails. The Meadow Trail, an easy stroll of about twenty minutes, extends six tenths of a mile from a point near the Main House past the old observatory and parallel to the grassy meadow. Branching off from this trail is Cliff Trail, which dips down along the cliffs toward the river

*Continued on next page*

## NOW IN THE CARRIAGE BARN: TWO SURREYS WITH FRINGE

Americans born around the turn of the century, or a few years afterward, often look back with tender memories to the "good old horse-an-buggy days," even though they would not now give up for the nobility of the carriage the mobility of the car.

*Continued on next page*

## HILDENE'S OPENING PROGRAM SET FOR FIRST WEEK IN JULY

Months of planning and hard work by staff, volunteers and employed personnel have placed the Hildene mansion house, gardens and grounds in a state of readiness for the first full summer season of visitors.

Because of the limited number who can be accommodated at one time the opening activities are being spread over a four-day period, July 1 to 4, with July 3 set aside as Members' Day. All Friends of Hildene and their guests will be admitted without charge. FOH membership entitles members to free admission on all other days as well throughout the remainder of the season, which will extend through October 28.

The gate on route 7, near the Dellwood Cemetery in the southern part of Manchester Village, will open at 10 a.m. Closing hour is 4 p.m. and Hildene will be open six days a week. It will be closed on Mondays. Parking has been provided in a new clearing near the Carriage Barn, which will itself serve as a visitors' center and the starting point for tours of the Main House. The general public will be admitted beginning July 4, with admission of \$2 for adults, \$1 for children and \$5 for families. Nature trails and picnic areas are open without charge at all times.

The formal dedication program is scheduled for Sunday, July 1, at 2 p.m., with approximately 160 invited guests. These will include volunteers, craftsmen, trustees, staff members, major contributors and others who have been involved in the Hildene restoration project. Oscar Johnson, a trustee, will give a salute to the flag, Robert Schmid, president of Friends of Hildene, will make a welcoming speech, and David Sheldon, executive director, will introduce guests.

Dr. Mark E. Neely, Jr., director of the Louls A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum at Fort Wayne, Indiana, will give the principal address. He will be introduced by another outstanding Lincoln scholar, Frank Williams, president of the Lincoln Group of Boston. The afternoon ceremonies will conclude with a tour.

On Monday, July 2, tours are planned for other groups of invited guests. Among these will be participants in the 27th annual Ekwanok Lincoln Tournament, established in honor of Robert Lincoln, who was president of the golf club for many years. Also visiting on that day will be board members of the Southern Vermont Art Center and of the

*Continued on next page*



## HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?



With peonies and phlox among the hedges, here examined by Diana Talcott, Manchester Garden Club, Nancy Simson, Arlington Garden Club, Judy Taylor, Hildene trustee, and Camilla Faunce, garden coordinator.

### GARDENS (Continued)

bottom and loops back to the orchard in the rear of the house. It is a more strenuous hike of 1.4 miles.

As to the gardens, the restoration task has been coordinated by Camilla Faunce, another young camper, a trail builder and a hard-working gardener who attended the North Country gardening school at Lake Placid. She joined the Hildene staff under the CETA program last January and after laying out the cross-country ski trail began to pore over old garden books, many in the Hildene library. She also consulted a diagram of Hildene plantings drawn soon after the Lincolns moved here.

"But we found that many of these plantings had only been proposed," Camilla said. "We also discovered that some of the things that *had* been planted did not do well in the Vermont climate and eventually died. So we consulted many publications and sought advice from landscape historians. Our aim was to restore the gardens as they were when Robert Lincoln lived here but with shrubs and flowers hardy enough to survive."

The principal effort this spring was the planting of rhododendron and azalea bushes in the plots on either side of the entrance and in an area at the rear of the house near the long paved patio.

The women of the two community garden clubs have undertaken to keep the gardens weeded. They will also provide cut flowers from their own gardens for the main rooms of the house.

Those who have been most active in the Hildene project are: from the Arlington Garden club, Mildred Fersh, Ann Marsh, Nancy Simson, Pamela Hyland, Lillian Reynolds and Olive Chiarello; from the Manchester club, Diana Talcott, Bonnie Faracl, Ethel Simmons, Mary Boline and Wendy Roberts. The two garden clubs have also contributed several hundred dollars to the landscaping program.

Another contribution for the gardens, a sum of \$500, has come from the Bullhead Pond Foundation.

## HILDENE'S OPENING (Continued)

Bennington Museum and the Park-McCullough House.

Visitors will be taken through the Main House in small groups, each with a tour guide. Entering under the front portico, they will step into a spacious entry and main hall, which look out onto the formal garden in the rear. All of the first floor interiors have been gone over, the beautiful oak floors sanded and stained, the walls and ceilings painted where needed, and the furniture put into condition. Among the ground floor rooms open to visitors are the formal parlor, with fireplace and high glass-enclosed book-cases, the dining room with its scenic wallpaper, Robert Lincoln's bedroom, his adjoining study and his file room, and a guest room called the Taft room because President William Howard Taft slept there.

In the Robert Lincoln bedroom is a mahogany double bed with a carved headboard that features a Masonic emblem. This had been given to Brian and Susan Hill by Miss Peggy Beckwith, Robert Lincoln's granddaughter, before her death in 1975, and the Hills recently returned it to Hildene on permanent loan.

**A RESTORATION GRANT OF \$6000** has been announced by the Cecil Howard Charitable trust, Robert Sincerbeaux trustee. This sum will underwrite the complete restoration of the private suite of Robert Todd Lincoln on the first floor of the Main House.

Of special interest in the kitchen is a big coal- or wood-burning range. There is also an electric range of more recent vintage, but the old cast iron reliable still dominates the room. It took several long evenings of hard and dirty work, however, for two determined women volunteers, Jackie Morningstar and Pat Evans, armed with putty knives and scouring pads, to remove accumulated grease and stove blacking and put the range in condition for inspection by visitors. Second floor rooms on display are Mrs. Lincoln's sitting room and Miss Beckwith's bedroom, both of which overlook the back garden, Miss Beckwith's studio work room and a room designated the children's room.

### SURREYS (Continued)

Hildene records don't reveal just what kind of horse-drawn vehicles the Lincolns used in the early 1900s, but it is known that a carriage of some sort, driven by a coachman, met them at the old Manchester Depot when they arrived in Lincoln's private railroad car. (President of the Pullman Company for many years, he traveled in appropriate style.) And carriages and buggies of all descriptions, and sleighs in the winter, were picturesque elements of the Manchester landscape in those days.

To help bring back the Hildene of around 1905, two surreys, a buggy and a sleigh have been lent for display in the Carriage Barn by John McCullough, whose ancestors built in 1865 the elegant North Bennington mansion now known as the Park-McCullough House. It was occupied for many years by a succession of generations of the related Park and McCullough families (sometimes several generations at the same time.) Today it is a cultural center and a museum, housing antiques, china and

*Continued on last page*





## TOY SOLDIERS ON PARADE AT GRANDPA LINCOLN'S

Scores of toy soldiers, some carrying guns, others band instruments, many astride horses, and all wearing colorful uniforms, are among the interesting items of Lincoln memorabilia found in the Hildene attic and now on display for visitors.

The largest and most elaborate set consists of 63 men and 14 horses, plus wagons, ammunition carts and a canon. Included in the array, which a Hildene volunteer, Warren Frank, arranged in formation on a cloth-covered board, are a sixteen-piece band with conductor, and a campfire scene. Seated on logs on either side of a campfire (with lead flames leaping) are a soldier eating from a dish and another reading a map or a letter from home.

Only two inches high, the lead soldiers of this set have been made with meticulous attention to detail, though how authentic the detail remains something of a question. The trousers are blue, the coats red, some with gold decorations. Some of the men wear Civil War type blue caps, others blue helmets with gold plumes. It isn't clear just what period of military history they represent, but one is carrying the Stars and Stripes, which obviously signifies U.S. troops.

In all there are some 140 pieces in the Hildene contingent. One small set of eight men, each about three inches tall, recently arrived at Hildene in a box from Mr. and Mrs. Ogden Pleissner of Dorset. With them was a note that said they were Civil War soldiers which had belonged to Robert Lincoln and which had been given to Mrs. Pleissner by her good friend, the late Lincoln Isham, one of Lincoln's grandsons, who died in 1971. Mrs. Pleissner said that Isham "had a whole table full of toy soldiers in his studio at Dorset, which I think he had inherited from his grandfather."

The other grandson, Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, who now lives in Washington, D.C., has told acquaintances that he owned a set of lead soldier molds as a boy and used to make soldiers himself.

There are many other pieces in the Hildene army, including a squad of "Rough Riders", of the Teddy



Roosevelt era. On display for some time at the Bennington Museum, they are now back at Hildene. Some of the figures are in sailors' uniforms, and there is a handful of Indians, lying prone with arrows drawn, ready to let fly at unsuspecting cavalymen.

Hildene officials doubt that any of these soldiers belonged to Robert Todd Lincoln as a boy. They were toys his grandchildren played with at Grandpa's house. But it would not have been surprising if Grandpa Lincoln, who was a young captain in the closing days of the Civil War and later the Secretary of War, got down on his knees to join young Lincoln Isham and Robert Beckwith (called "Bud") and perhaps little Peggy Beckwith also, on the Hildene battleground.

Robert Louis Stevenson's beloved stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, twelve years old when the author, then thirty-one, was writing "Treasure Island", describes in delightful detail how the two of them conducted war games, "conceived with an enormous elaboration, and involving six hundred miniature lead soldiers." They drew a big map on the floor of an otherwise unused room and on it arranged their regiments, shooting at each other's forces with pellets from spring pistols and, for artillery shells, "the repeated throws of a deadly double sleeve-link," (British for cuff-link.)

A SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM of the Vermont Council on the Arts has provided several young people to serve as museum aides in connection with the exhibits at Hildene. And a staff of volunteer tour guides has been recruited and trained by Claire W. Schoffstall, program manager. But more volunteers are needed for writing letters, mailing and other tasks. If interested please call Mrs. Schoffstall at (802) 362-1788.





## HILDENE Robert Todd Lincoln's

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### SURREYS (Continued)

paintings, and — in its own huge carriage barn — a remarkable collection of fifteen carriages. All had been used at one time or another by members of the families and their guests.

The two surreys on loan to Hildene match (with only slight variations) the memorable specifications of "that shiny little surrey with the fringe on the top", dear to all "Oklahoma" fans.

"The wheels are yeller, the upholstery's brown,  
The dashboard's genuwine leather.

With isinglass curtains you can roll right down

In case there's a change in the weather."

Each of the surreys is a two-seater, with handsome brass headlamps — "two bright side lights a-winkin' and blinkin". The side panels are a rich brown, highly polished, and there are patent leather fenders over the wheels. Notes on the Park-McCullough House carriages explain that the front fenders served not only to keep mud from splashing up during the drive but "to keep the ladies' skirts off the dirty wheel when they climbed into the carriage." The hard rubber tires indicate the vehicles date from around the late 1890s to the turn of the century. Most of the carriages in the collection were made by the Joubert & White Co., of Glens Falls, N.Y.

The buggy that Mr. McCullough lent to Hildene is black, and so is the sleigh, also called a cutter. On the floor of the sleigh is a carpet-covered foot-warmer, heated by hot coals.

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Steven M. Spencer, editor  
David C. Sheldon, executive director

### RESTORATION FUND CAMPAIGN MOVES AHEAD

The 1979 Restoration Fund campaign has reached 76 per cent of its goal, with still more than two months to go, according to an announcement of June 15 by Robert Schmid, president of FOH. "We are extremely pleased with the response to date," Schmid said. "But we are by no means slowing down our efforts to complete the campaign and reach our stated goal."

Schmid reported commitments of \$58,000 toward the desired total of \$76,000, with a breakdown as follows: government grants \$33,000; private foundation grant \$6,000; contributions from the nine-member Board of Trustees \$8,000; donations from business and industry \$7,000, including \$1,000 from each of the four Manchester banks, Catamount, Factory Point, First Vermont, and Rutland Savings; other major gifts \$4,000.

Yes, I want to be a member of **FRIENDS of HILDENE, INC.** for the next 12 months. Enclosed is my **TAX DEDUCTIBLE** membership contribution of:

Please make checks payable to **FRIENDS of HILDENE, INC.** and mail to Box 331, Manchester, Vermont 05254.

Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$5000 or more
Benefactor	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$1000
Patron	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 500
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 100
Sustaining	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 50
Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 25
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 5 or more

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# NEWS FROM HISTORIC HILDENE



VOL. 3 NO. 5

MANCHESTER, VERMONT

AUTUMN 1979

## PIPE-ORGAN RESTORATION WILL BEGIN IN NOVEMBER

Hildene's player pipe-organ, one of the oldest residential organs in the country, but silent since it went out of order forty years ago, will peal forth once again next summer in rich chords and harmonies. The trustees have decided, after much study, to enter into a \$10,000 contract for its restoration. Work will begin about November 1, immediately after the close of the summer visiting season, and will proceed through much of the winter. Although \$6,000 of the total cost of \$10,000 is on hand, the trustees are hoping that music-lovers will contribute the \$4,000 balance in the meantime.

Installed in 1908, three years after Robert Todd Lincoln and his wife, Mary Harlan, moved into their new summer residence in the Manchester hills, the organ is a product of the Aeolian Company, then at Aeolian Hall in New York City, a well-known firm whose letterhead identified it as "Manufacturers of Aeolian Pipe-Organs for Salons, Music Rooms, Foyer and Reception Halls in Private Residences." The contract, found in the Hildene file room, bears Robert T. Lincoln's signature, with the date July 31, 1908.

The two-manual console in the corner of the reception hall, with its pigeon-hole rack of player rolls alongside (there are 210 rolls in all) is one of the first objects the visitors' eyes light upon as they enter the Main House. And as the tour guide gestures toward the array of more than 1,000 pipes concealed behind the wooden grilles on the spacious stair landing many of them comment, "It's too bad we can't hear it played today." With this lament the tour guides have all agreed.

So have the trustees, including the Treasurer Robert Thum, who is himself an organ buff and a lover of classical music. Thum's son, Frank is an apprentice organ technician and is of course also much interested in the future of the Hildene instrument. Thum and others therefore began last year to make inquiries about the possibilities of putting the organ back into playable condition. They obtained estimates that varied greatly but decided to insert in the Autumn, 1978 issue of NEWS FROM HISTORIC HILDENE a plea for "a music-loving benefactor" who might wish to contribute to an organ restoration fund.

Much to the trustees' gratification, an anonymous donor saw the newsletter item and responded with a pledge of \$6,000. This was far from enough to meet what subsequently appeared to be the figure most likely to accomplish the necessary rebuilding. But last June Thum continued his inquiries, as chairman of a Hildene organ committee, confident that the instrument was worth preserving if funds could be found. One organ consultant had declared it "one of the oldest residence organs" he had seen, "and certainly one of the few of its period remaining unaltered, though in a decayed state." It was his opinion that "the historical value of this instrument would make it a prime subject for restoration, and the option of playing the rolls would further lend interest to visitors' to Hildene."

In June of this year, Larry Nevin, of Guilford, Vermont, a highly recommended expert in organ restoration, spent three

## A SUCCESSFUL FIRST SEASON WAS THE SUMMER OF '79

As Vermont's green hills change once more to hues of red and gold, those responsible for the newest New England tourist attraction, the restored and refurbished Manchester home of the late Robert Todd Lincoln, can look back with satisfaction upon a highly successful summer of 1979. Hildene, which opened to the public early in July for its first full season as a historic site, had drawn a total of 9,000 visitors up to September 30, when this newsletter went to press. And many more were expected during the month of October, the popular foliage season.

Considering the mid-summer gasoline shortages, both rumored and real, Hildene officials had feared the flow of tourists might be disappointingly thin. But the power of the Lincoln family name and the spread of information about Hildene proved most effective. There were announcements on radio and TV, feature articles in newspapers and magazines of the area and direct publicity efforts among motels, tour agents, etc.

Attendance rose from a daily average of about 125 in July to a high mark of 260 on the Sunday of the Labor Day weekend. Although the majority of the visitors came from Vermont and Western New York, there were many from more distant places, including Illinois and Florida; a total of nearly thirty states were represented. And they were of all ages, including three-generation family groups and an occasional infant in a back-pack carrier.

Tour guides report that most of the visitors expressed themselves as much pleased with the appearance of the house and the grounds. They were impressed by the amount and the quality of the restoration work that had been done in the relatively brief time since the estate had been acquired by Friends of Hildene.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING of members of Friends of Hildene will be held October 24 at 7:30 p.m. in the Carriage Barn. The agenda will include election of trustees to fill newly created vacancies and vacancies caused by annual rotation, recommendations on increasing the number of trustees, and other business. Since our members, now more than 800, are scattered over twenty-three states and beyond, not all will be able to attend the meeting. Enclosed are proxy ballots to assure a quorum. Please fill out and return the ballot to us if you cannot attend.

This reaction was quite in accord with that of a number of individuals who have been close to the developments here, either as active participants or as interested observers. One of these is William Pinney, director of the state's Division for Historic Preservation. He has been in this work for twenty years and was involved in the early recommendations for restoring Hildene and in obtaining Federal grants for the project.

"Everything has been done in a very professional manner unlike so many 'house museum' projects, taken on by small



## THEY REMEMBER WHEN . . .

A young anthropologist who is an expert in stirring up old memories has been assembling a valuable contribution to the history of the Robert Todd Lincoln family at Hildene. She is Alison Otis, 25, a native of Manchester and a research associate in cultural anthropology at the Oregon State University Graduate School. For the past several months she has been working on an "Oral History" project for Hildene, interviewing men and women who knew the Lincolns or who were employed at their big Manchester summer home.

Oral history is woven out of the recollections of everyday people who were eye witnesses to events of interest or who knew or worked with individuals whose lives figured to an important degree in the life and times of a community. Charles T. Morrissey, a former director of the Vermont Historical Society, now a history consultant to the Ford Foundation, has described the successful oral historian as "part seer, part scholar, part technician and sometimes just a good guest." He has also observed that native Vermonters are the hardest people to interview.

Alison Otis is not in total agreement with this assessment, for she says, "it's amazing the things I've heard." But she does admit that it has not always been easy to persuade the older people to talk, and to get their conversation down on tape. The fact that she is herself a Vermonter, and a personable young woman, has doubtless been of help. She is the daughter of Don B. Otis, assistant headmaster of Burr and Burton Seminary, and Nancy Otis, co-author with E.L. Bigelow of Manchester's bi-centennial town history in 1961. She was graduated from Connecticut College with honors in anthropology and at Oregon State she has been conducting folklore interviews with Oregonians all over the state.

Her Hildene interviews, to be transcribed and compiled as background information for the tour guides and possibly as material to be published, have yielded a great many human glimpses of the Robert Lincoln family members and of life at Hildene. They will be valuable not only as they relate to this home but as colorful bits of the Manchester community's history in general.

Item: Theresa Zullo, for many years an elementary school teacher, remembers that when she was nine or ten years old she and her friends "used to go down to the bank every morning at 8 o'clock to see Robert Todd Lincoln drive up in his beautiful open coach drawn by two or sometimes four horses." The children would regularly ask him for his autograph, and regularly he would oblige, sometimes handing them ten cents in addition. "And he never seemed annoyed that we were there," Mrs. Zullo recalls.

Item: Mrs. Helen Pearson, now 88, remembers watching the construction of the Hildene mansion in 1904 and 1905. And when she was seventeen she worked there mending linens. "Often Mr. Lincoln would send Richardson, the coachman, up to get me with the car or horse and buggy. I'd have lunch with them . . . Mr. Lincoln was such a gentleman. He would always step out and help me into the car, and he'd ride in the back. Yes, both of us."

Another native Vermonter, the writer, Ruth M. Rasey Simpson remembers Lincoln in a passage of her book, *OUT OF THE SALT BOX*, *The Savour of Old Vermont*, which is the story of several generations of her family on their farm on Rupert Mountain.

He often came to the mountain each summer in her girlhood, she wrote. "How impressed we young ones were at first, when his big black limousine with its chauffeur would glide up into the meadow above our house, where Mr. Lincoln would quietly enjoy the hour of sunset. A glorious hour it often was, as the western sky flamed with rose and gold, against which far peaks of the Adirondacks and Helderbergs serenely stood in purple majesty. Then as the afterglow gilded the fleecy clouds over the Green Mountains to the east, and the moon and evening star came to the vast blue arch above the twilight land, the motor would purr back down the road to Mr. Lincoln's country home in Manchester."

## THREE STAFF MEMBERS LEAVE

Three staff members who have served faithfully and effectively during Hildene's important restoration period have left to take on other duties. They are Kathy Griffis, office manager, Clement Tudor, bookkeeper, and Edgar Hill, assistant superintendent of grounds.

"All three made major contributions to the success of the Hildene operation," said David Sheldon, director of Hildene, "and we shall miss them very much."

Kathy Griffis joined the staff when the restoration program began in July, 1978. Hers was the cheery voice you usually heard when you called Hildene, and she kept the day-to-day affairs of the office running smoothly. She plans to return to classes at the University of Vermont in the fall of 1980 and in the meantime is working as a child's nurse. She has been succeeded by Marion Oliver, of Sunderland.

"Clem Tudor set up the entire bookkeeping system during the past year," Sheldon said, "and for this we are all most appreciative."

Edgar Hill's experienced hand has been seen in much of the renovation work, including the conversion of the carriage barn and stables into a visitors' center. Involved here was the installation of restrooms one of which can accommodate wheel-chair users. While erecting new studding and siding at the annex building, Hill had to cling for hours at a time to the outer wall, over a sheer cliffside drop, with a lineman's belt around him.

Hill's fifteen-year-old son, Wesley, a student at Burr and Burton Seminary, was also at Hildene during the summer, helping in the painting. He lettered many of the signs at the Visitors' Center.



## ALL PRAISE TO THE TOUR GUIDES

A major share of the credit for the success of Hildene's summer tourist season belongs to the thirty-six guides, or docents — twenty-nine women and seven men — who escorted the groups of visitors through the Main House, giving background information on the rooms and their former occupants. Together they contributed about 100 hours a week, most of them on a volunteer basis. Each was on duty once a week or oftener.

The docents were recruited and trained by Mrs. Claire Schoffstall, Hildene's program manager, who also arranged the exhibits and found time for pre-tour publicity. For identification each docent wore a Hildene pin. The women wore green skirts and some of the men wore green slacks.

Following is a list in alphabetic order, of those who served this summer: Susan Bauers, Phebe Bell, Laurie Bentley, Wallace and Olive Benward, Alison Boright, Charlotte Brooks, Myrtle Bullock, Rose Conduit, Maggie Fllis, Sheila Foster, Marti Heilemann, Michael Heinel, Peter Holmes, Doris Hurley, Oscar Johnson, Molly Lambert, Jane MacElIven, Betty Markley, Helen Mitchell, Sarah Nelson, Joann Oakley, Helen Olson, Susan Posthauer, David Quesnell, Mary Roesing, Jean Rubick, Robert and Mary Schmid, Celeste Soenicksen, Diana Talcott, Judy Taylor, Paige and Julie Thorner, Robert Thum, Jennifer Vasey.

NEWS FROM HISTORIC HILDENE is the quarterly newsletter of Friends of Hildene, Inc. FOH has as its purpose the preservation of Hildene's open lands and the restoration of its buildings so that the estate can serve the public as an educational and cultural resource and as a memorial to Robert Todd Lincoln and his family. Hildene is located on U.S. Route 7 just south of Manchester, Vermont 05254. Telephone (802) 362-1788.

Steven M. Spencer, editor  
David C. Sheldon, executive director



## A "MATCHING GRANT" OFFER BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A substantial portion of the funds for Hildene's restoration comes through matching grants, in which a contribution from a public body or some other organization is made on condition that the recipient raise an equal amount from private gifts. This has become a well established practice in 20th Century financing of community projects. Actually it has a precedent going back at least as far as the life of Abraham Lincoln himself. The circumstances of Lincoln's offer — and the financial soundness of the intended recipient — were quite different from the Hildene situation, but the principle was the same.

The story of Lincoln's proposed matching grant (which he did not describe in those terms, however) appears in several of the Lincoln biographies. One account is in a small volume, *PERSONAL TRAITS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN*, written by Helen Nicolay, daughter of John Nicolay, one of Lincoln's secretaries and biographers. Lincoln, she wrote, "had no patience with the sin of shiftlessness, no matter how patient he might be with the sinner." The "sinner" in this case was his stepbrother, John D. Johnston, the son of Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln by her first husband. Johnston, in Miss Nicolay's words, "was born with a genius for remaining in debt, and was always asking for help." Lincoln's letters to him "were as uncompromisingly truthful as they were generous," she wrote. In one of them, dated January 12, 1851, from Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln said: "Your request for eighty dollars I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little you have said to me, 'We can get along very well now;' but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now, this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What I think the defect is, I think I know. You are not lazy, and still you are an idler. I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good day's work, in any one day. You do not very much dislike work, and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; it is vastly important to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break the habit. . . . You are now in need of some money; and what I propose is, that you should go to work 'tooth and nail' for somebody who will give you money for it. Let Father [Thomas Lincoln, then about 73] and your boys take charge of your things at home, prepare for a crop and make the crop, and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get; and to secure you a fair reward for your labor, I now promise you, that for every dollar you will, between this and the first of May, get for your labor, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County. Now if you will do this you will soon be out of debt, and what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again."

Whether John Johnston took his stepbrother's advice and accepted his "matching grant" offer is not recorded. Lincoln's father, Thomas, then quite ill, died five days after this letter was written.



### A THOUGHT FOR OUR TIME

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?"

*Abraham Lincoln in his First Inaugural address, March 4, 1861.*

PIPE-ORGAN — continued from page 1

days going over the Hildene instrument, part of the time accompanied by Thum. He peered into its interior, checked every part of its complex mechanism, including the blower room in the basement. He concluded that the damage was not as extensive as previous estimates had suggested.

He found, however, that the console would have to be completely rebuilt, hundreds of magnets would have to be replaced in the intricate action chain, a new solid state relay system with switches would have to be installed, and many other things done to counteract the years of wear and tear and disuse sustained by this seventy-one-year-old instrument. In addition, some of the pipes would have to be revoiced, a process in which the mouth and lip of a pipe are smoothed and trimmed to restore the proper tonal quality. All of these steps demand the meticulous, difficult and time-consuming hand work of a skilled and experienced craftsman.

Mr. Nevin's \$10,000 estimate of the cost, much lower than an earlier one which had been considered far beyond Hildene's limited resources, was evaluated by the trustees this past summer and they decided it was within an attainable range. They therefore voted to go ahead with the restoration, and they are once more eager to hear from "music-loving benefactors" who will come forth with the \$4,000 needed to complete the funding.

When Hildene reopens next spring for its 1980 season it is expected that the old organ, its voice fully restored, will again become a living and lively part of the Lincoln homestead. There will be occasional concerts by talented organists, and it is hoped that over the years the organ, through concert admission fees, will become a self-sustaining feature of the Hildene operation.

Those who remember the early days here say the organ was frequently played in the evenings after dinner, sometimes by organists brought over from Albany, often by members of the family. Mary Lincoln herself played it, as well as the piano. Two Steinways, a grand and an upright, still stand in the second floor suite of rooms. At the time Mary Harlan was first being "squired" by young Robert Lincoln in Washington, in 1865, it was said of her that she "played the harp divinely." Years later, at Hildene, her husband, like many men of that day who could fancy themselves "making music" as they sat at the controls of a player piano, liked to do the same with the Aeolian player-organ and the controls that permitted him to vary the tempo, volume and other characteristics of the sound.

The Lincoln daughters, Mrs. Mary Lincoln Isham and Mrs. Jessie Lincoln Beckwith Randolph also played the Hildene organ. So did their granddaughter, Mary "Peggy" Beckwith, one of whose many avocations was music. Several pages of music manuscript, containing songs she had written are among the Hildene memorabilia.

Scanning the titles of the player rolls one finds the Lincoln's tastes leaned to the classical, from Bach to Verdi and Wagner. There are many of the standard favorites, including Dvorak's *Humoresque* and *New World Symphony*; Gounod's *Ave Maria*, selections from *Tosca* and from the *Mikado*. There are also Strauss waltzes and a piece labeled *Grizzly Bear Rag*.



TO HELP HILDENE'S AEOLIAN ORGAN make music again

I enclose my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
to the organ restoration fund.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Friends of Hildene,  
Manchester, Vermont 05254 (Our Federal tax exempt  
identification number is 51-0201160.)

amateur groups without sufficient background or finances," he remarked. "All of the work done here has been excellent — the selection of paint colors, the refinishing of the floors, the papering of the walls and the cleaning or reupholstering of the furniture. And the grounds have been beautifully restored, a task done in short order that ordinarily would have taken several years to accomplish. The whole place has the feeling of what it must have been like when Hildene was new, and yet being lived in." Mr. Pinney also thought the attendance had been unusually good, especially considering that this was Hildene's first year as a tourist attraction.

Maximilian L. Ferro, the preservation architect who was retained for much of the planning, also expressed gratification at the way the work had progressed, "in a highly visible and important historic landmark of the true national significance." And concerning the participation of so many committed people he said, "the enthusiasm, cooperation and volunteer activity which accompanied this project have been consistently remarkable."

The prescribed tour begins in the Visitors' Center in the carriage barn, where a brief but informative slide show, with a taped narrative, gives the visitor glimpses of the Lincoln family and of Hildene itself. Excellent color photos of the Hildene mansion and of scenes around the estate, made by Hildene's official photographer, Sheila Foster, round out the slide show, which has drawn many enthusiastic comments.

Exhibits in the larger rooms of the Carriage Barn have also been a major attraction. Among these are the several vehicles which represent those used by the Lincolns through the years. Most recent is a sleek, deep-blue 1933 Lincoln cabriolet, with rumble seat, a very rare model lent by Joseph E. Joseph, of North Bennington. He is a collector and a former president of the Classic Car Association of America. The classic Lincoln car joined two surreys, a buggy and a sleigh, all lent by John McCullough from the Park-McCullough House collection of horse-drawn vehicles. Unfortunately, none of the carriages and cars the Lincolns actually used are still at Hildene, but it is known that they had at least one carriage and there are snapshots of Peggy as a child with her pony cart. Robert Lincoln's first automobile was a 1905 Thomas, and he later owned a Rolls Royce. Miss Beckwith had a 12-cylinder Cadillac, a stripped down roadster, and at the time of her death a Volvo station wagon.

Many of this summer's visitors spent an hour or more in the Visitors Center, examining the Lincoln family portraits, reading clippings, letters and other printed material. Of special interest have been the facsimile of the *New York Times* edition reporting Lincoln's 1860 election, and more recently, original copies of the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald* and the *Boston Herald*, all of April 15, 1865, reporting President Lincoln's assassination. The *New York Times* and *Boston Herald* copies are on permanent loan from William Coonley of Troy, N.Y. and the *New York Herald* is a gift of Mrs. Patricia Dupree, of Manchester.

Among the other items of Lincolniana which have drawn much attention is a copy of President Lincoln's letter to eleven-year-old Grace Bedell, replying to her suggestion that he let his whiskers grow because "you would look a great deal better for your face is so thin." Whether influenced by Grace or not (a photo of her as a grown woman is also shown) Lincoln did in fact let his whiskers begin to grow within a month, becoming the first bearded president of the United States.

In good weather visitors walked from the Visitors' Center to the Main House, but during several sudden downpours staff cars were used to carry them up. Those who enjoyed hiking had four nature trails to choose from. The newest, which starts at the corner of the Carriage Barn and extends along the edge of a meadow and into dense woods through the northwestern section of the Hildene acreage, was laid out by Robert Treat as part of his Eagle Scout public service project. He was assisted by fellow members of Scout Troop 333 and their fathers. They cleared a four-foot path through the woods and constructed two log bridges. Camilla Faunce, Hildene's naturalist coordinator, helped establish the general course of the trail.

David Sheldon, director of Hildene, has pointed out that more rooms are being shown at Hildene (fifteen) than in many of the historic houses open to visitors throughout the country, and Hildene visitors appreciated this.

In the course of the summer's inspection of the house there were many unexpected comments and questions. One woman, assuming such an elegant home would have all the modern appurtenances, asked "Where is the swimming pool?" There is none; private pools were a rarity in Robert Lincoln's day.

Another visitor missed the grandfather's clock "that used to stand on the stair landing" and she asked "Where is the drum desk that was in Mr. Lincoln's study?" She was told that both items had been disposed of in bequests to Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith. A few minutes later, as the group looked into the linen room, the same visitor exclaimed, "Why there is the step-ladder Mrs. Lincoln fell from and broke her leg. She was up here checking the linens."

It developed that the knowledgeable visitor, who left without giving her name, had been a nurse at Hildene for several weeks in 1924, when Mrs. Lincoln was recovering from her fall.

A woman from Hyde Park, a Boston suburb, was so enthusiastic about her visit that at its conclusion she stepped up and planted a thank-you kiss on the cheek of her tour guide, Oscar Johnson, vice-president of Hildene. "You conveyed so much warmth in telling us about Hildene's occupants," she later wrote in a fan letter, "that I wished that I had known them better. 'Peg' especially seemed so real and made me wish that I knew her better. Just as I wish that I knew you better."

All in all it has been a most satisfactory debut for Hildene as the Nation's newest major historic site.

## SOUVENIRS OF HILDENE FOR SALE

Books about Robert Todd Lincoln, postcards and slides and other items with a Lincoln or Hildene theme are on sale at the Visitors' Center or by mail. Among these are the following, with prices; ROBERT TODD LINCOLN, A MAN IN HIS OWN RIGHT, by John S. Goff, \$12.50 plus \$1 for postage; A PORTRAIT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN LETTERS OF HIS OLDEST SON, by Paul M. Angle, \$6 plus \$1 postage; Armatale plate (a pewter-like metal) with embossed scene of the Hildene mansion, \$15 plus \$1 postage; set of 5 slides in color, \$2 plus 50 cents postage; set of six postcards, 75 cents plus 50 cents for postage; Christmas cards (winter scene of the house), ten for \$2.50 plus 50 cents postage. To order by mail send money order or check to Friends of Hildene, Manchester, Vermont 05254.

Yes, I want to be a member of FRIENDS OF HILDENE, INC., for the next 12 months. Enclosed is my TAX DEDUCTIBLE membership contribution of:

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Life Member  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 or more |
| Benefactor   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000         |
| Patron       | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 500          |
| Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100          |
| Sustaining   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 50           |
| Family       | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25           |
| Individual   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5 or more    |

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## HISTORIC HILDENE

### ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF FRIENDS OF HILDENE, INC. FOR THE FISCAL YEAR SEPTEMBER 1, 1978 TO AUGUST 31, 1979

The year began with the dedication of Hildene as the nation's newest historic site on September 18, 1978. Governor Richard Snelling cut the ribbon that admitted the first official visitor to Hildene, opening a 27-day foliage season of house tours during which 1,800 people--60 percent of them from out-of-state--saw Robert Todd Lincoln's home for the first time. When Hildene's first full tourist season began on July 5, 1979, the stream of visitors resumed, and by the end of the fiscal year the total number of tours, including those from the previous fall, came to 8,400. (See page one of Autumn 1979 NEWSLETTER for details)

The physical restoration of the Hildene estate began during this fiscal year with a major program that was designed and carried out at a total cost of just under \$75,000. Key elements in the program were the refurbishing of principal downstairs rooms in the Main House; transformation of the carriage barn into the Visitors Center; creation of a Visitors' Parking lot; exterior painting; and landscaping. In addition to the dollar outlays summarized in the financial tables, the restoration program was assisted by manpower provided under an \$18,000 CETA project award. A grant of \$25,000 from the Division of Historic Preservation of the State of Vermont was matched by an equal amount in private contributions, including \$6,000 from the Cecil Howard Charitable Trust. Hildene's visitors, as well as specialists in the field of historic preservation have commented most favorably on the results of this first phase in Hildene's renaissance.

The Trustees' aim to make of Hildene a resource available to the whole community began to be realized during the year. Two nature trails were opened to the public in the autumn of 1978, and a third--designed and built by local Boy Scout Troop #333--was dedicated in August, 1979. In February 1979, a cross-country ski trail was christened as part of a two-day celebration of Abraham Lincoln's Birthday. There was no fee for the use of the trails or for any of the Lincoln's Birthday events. The latter were attended by more than 600 people in clear, bright, sub-zero weather.

Hildene's management structure was strengthened during the year by the appointment of 13 men and women to a newly-formed Advisory Board. Selected to represent a cross-section of the leading citizens of the community, this adjunct board has added depth and variety to Hildene's governance. The Board of Trustees itself will also be enlarged under a proposal to be submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Members of Friends of Hildene scheduled for October 24, 1979.

The extraordinary need for restoration outlays in our first year produced an excess of \$10,500 in expenditures over income. We had planned to raise these funds during July and August, but staff and Trustees were diverted to the essential and welcome task of accommodating a swelling tide of admission-paying visitors. But the over-expenditure, while perhaps justifiable in a first-year operation, was nevertheless unintended and contrary to FOH fiscal policy. One of the main challenges before the Trustees and the membership in the current year will be to raise all the funds necessary to meet our 1979-80 obligations as well as those needed to wipe out the past year's deficit. To do this will require total receipts of \$139,000 in cash and donated materials and services as compared with \$116,400 raised in the year just past. That this is an attainable goal is strongly suggested by the cash income and pledges received during the month of September, 1979: the total is \$14,200 which is more than 10 percent of the target amount for the new fiscal year.

Hildene's membership and its volunteers, staff, Advisors, and Trustees have reason to be proud of their first year's achievements, and we can look forward with confidence to continued progress in 1980.

Robert Schmid, Chairman  
October 6, 1979

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES, 1978-79

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Oscar Johnson	Judith Taylor
Gerald Keneally	Robert Thum
Arthur O'Dea, Jr.	Henry van Loon
Romi Perkins	

#### BOARD OF ADVISORS, 1978-79

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#### STAFF, 1978-79

David C. Sheldon, Executive Director  
Claire Schoffstall, Program Manager

Kenneth F. Hill, Buildings & Grounds  
Kathy Griffis, Secretary

FRIENDS OF HILDENE, INC.

(The tables below are based on preliminary figures. FOH's audited financial statement is due for submission to the Internal Revenue Service in December 1979, and a copy will be sent to members who request it.)

I. STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL CONDITION as of AUGUST 31, 1978 and AUGUST 31, 1979

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>8/31/78</u>	<u>8/31/79</u>	<u>LIABILITIES</u>	<u>8/31/78</u>	<u>8/31/79</u>
Land & Buildings	\$612,900	\$618,900	Accounts Payable	\$ 700	\$ 6,300
Furnishings	36,000	36,000	Note Due--Factory		
Accounts Receivable	-	21,500	Point National Bank	-	27,000
Inventory (cost)	-	2,900	Restricted Funds	-	2,200
Cash on hand	8,500	2,400	Fund Balance	656,700	646,200
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$657,400</b>	<b>\$681,700</b>	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$657,400</b>	<b>\$681,700</b>

II. STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE for the FISCAL YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 1979  
(All Figures Rounded)

A. CURRENT OPERATIONS

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENSES</u>	
Memberships	\$ 20,000	Salaries, Benefits	\$ 27,400
Visitor's Fees	12,300	Publicity, publications	5,800
Rent	12,300	Repairs (bldgs. & vehicles)	9,500
Sales*	17,100	Utilities	10,000
Contributions	4,700	Taxes, insurance	7,400
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 66,400</b>	Supplies	1,600
		Postage, Office Exp.	4,000
		Travel, Business Exp.	1,800
		Exhibits, Tourist Arrangements	3,400
		<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 70,900</b>
		Total Income	66,400
		<b>EXCESS OF OPERATIONS EXPENSE OVER INCOME</b>	<b>\$ (4,500)</b>

\*Includes Volvo (\$600) and  
timber sales (\$8,100)

B. RESTORATION FUND

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENSES</u>	
Div. of Historic		Main House	\$ 44,000
Preservation Grant	\$ 25,000	Carriage Barn	12,000
Private Foundation Grant	6,000	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 56,000</b>
Donated Services and			
Materials	10,000	Total Income	50,000
Contributions	9,000		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 50,000</b>		
		<b>EXCESS OF RESTORATION EXPENSE OVER INCOME</b>	<b>\$ (6,000)</b>





# Lincoln Lore

September, 1977

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Published each month by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1675

## TWO NEW LINCOLN SITES . . . MAYBE

America's continuing interest in Abraham Lincoln is a phenomenon most evident on a broadly popular level. There may well be less research in progress on Lincoln manuscripts and books than there was two or three decades ago. Real action is taking place, however, where masses of Americans look increasingly for their contacts with history, at historical sites. The National Park Service initiated a long-range program to improve the Lincoln home site in Springfield, Illinois, some years back. There is a large project under way to upgrade the interpretative material at other Lincoln sites in

Illinois as well. A new site in Kentucky was dedicated just this year, and people in Vermont, of all places, are at work to save another Lincoln-related historical site.

The newest addition is the Mary Todd Lincoln House in Lexington, Kentucky, dedicated on June ninth of this year. Like all such events, this dedication was the result of considerable struggle over a substantial period in the past. More than seven years ago, Mrs. Louis B. Nunn, wife of the governor of Kentucky at that time, visited the historic brick house in which Mary Todd spent her girlhood years. The wives of the



*From the Louis A. Warren  
Lincoln Library and Museum*

FIGURE 1. The Mary Todd Lincoln house on Main Street in Lexington, Kentucky.





**FIGURE 2.** Much of the Todd home is restored to the period 1832 - 1849, the time of Robert Smith Todd's residence there. This parlor contains the painted portrait of Robert Smith Todd. The couches are copies of furniture used by Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln in the White House.

*From the Louis A. Warren  
Lincoln Library and Museum*

governors of Indiana and Illinois were coming for a visit and had expressed an interest in seeing the house. Mrs. Nunn was shocked to find that the Todd home was a tumbledown warehouse for plumbing supplies.

The house had survived many close calls in the past. As early as 1921, civic and historical groups in Lexington showed interest in using the house for a museum. After a year's efforts, however, the only accomplishment was the placement of a tablet on the outside of the building describing its history. Occasional newspaper articles on the sad plight of the house sparked little interest. A proposal to use it for commercial pur-

poses in 1932 did prompt a protest from a black church across the street. Louis A. Warren, the first editor of *Lincoln Lore*, made several attempts in the 1940s to interest Lexington citizens in converting the home into an historic site, but in 1946, the house was nearly razed to make room for a gas station.

The home was a victim of forces of which we have only recently become aware. Before the era of woman's liberation, it was not easy to arouse enthusiasm for a *girlhood* home. Indeed, the Kentucky Mansions Preservation Foundation touts the home as "the first shrine to honor an American First Lady." C. Frank Dunn, a local Lexington historian who was

**FIGURE 3.** The master bedroom in the Todd house is furnished with pieces made in Winchester, Kentucky, in the early part of the nineteenth century. Knowledge of the type of carpet used in the room came from the 1849 inventory of the Robert Smith Todd estate.



*From the Louis A. Warren  
Lincoln Library and Museum*



interested in saving the house in 1949, wrote Louis Warren to tell him that it would never work to save the home "to glorify womanhood." It could only succeed as an essentially Lincoln-related memorial.

Dunn pointed to other problems. He did not feel that any prominent woman in Lexington would lead a campaign to save the Todd house. For one thing, the home was a notorious house of ill fame in some of the years after it passed out of Todd family hands. For another, most of the leaders of Lexington society were Confederate descendants. Despite the fact that the state did not secede, Lincoln's policies on race drove Kentucky sentiment into the camp of the Solid South after the war was over, and there that sentiment remained as late as 1949. A further problem was the extremely poor condition of the house. At that time, it seemed "utterly impossible to restore the place."

The Todd home went through the various stages of decay that properties on the slide go through. The original family left, and the occupants became people without a permanent home. From a rooming house, it became a place where people went just for an evening. From a saloon, it became a place occupied more by objects than people, a used-furniture store. At last, it became a place occupied only by objects, a warehouse.

Mrs. Nunn organized the Kentucky Mansions Preservation Foundation in 1969 to renovate the Executive Mansion in Frankfort. The organization restored White Hall, the home of Lincoln's minister to Russia, antislavery maverick Cassius M. Clay. The Foundation also took an interest in the Todd home, but the conversion of that home to a public historic site would not be accomplished without a final struggle.

The Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs raised \$26,500, the appraised value of the house. Governor Nunn provided \$100,000 in state money from a contingency fund. The Department of Housing and Urban Development included the block on which the Todd home was situated in a Lexington urban renewal tract. In 1971, the Commonwealth of Kentucky bought the tract, but a long legal battle ensued. The owners contested the state's ability to condemn the property on the basis of the value of that piece of property alone without considering its value in conjunction with surrounding properties. In 1973, the Kentucky Court of Appeals upheld a Fayette Circuit Court ruling that the state could condemn the property without considering the value of the adjacent property.

Actual restoration of the property could not begin until 1976. Governor Julian Carroll's administration provided \$465,000 to restore the house and purchase furnishings. The governor and his wife also made unused Executive Mansion furniture available for use in the Todd home. The feat was at last accomplished.

The house was built in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Robert Smith Todd purchased the house in 1832, when his daughter Mary was already fourteen years old. She lived in the home until she left for Springfield in 1839; her father lived there until his death in 1849. While he lived in the house, Robert Todd was clerk of the Kentucky House of Representatives, was elected to the Kentucky Senate, and was president of the Lexington branch of the Bank of Kentucky. The family gained substantial income from a grocery establishment.

Of course, the original furnishings of the Todd home have not survived. When Robert Todd died in 1849, his estate was offered for sale and was scattered far and wide. The inventory of the estate made for that sale survives, however, and from that inventory it was possible to make an educated guess at the furnishings of the house. The twenty-room brick house contains a rare portrait of Robert Todd and draperies copied from a surviving swatch from the original parlor. The home is open to visitors from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday.

The name of Robert Todd figures prominently in the struggle which is presently going on to save Hildene, a mansion in Manchester, Vermont. It was the home of Robert Todd Lincoln, the only son of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln to live to maturity. Robert first visited Manchester on a vacation to escape the heat of a Washington summer during the Civil War. He visited the area repeatedly after the war and was especially fond of the summer home his law partner, Edward Swift Isham, kept in the area. In 1902, now wealthy and successful, Robert Todd Lincoln purchased several hundred acres in Manchester. In 1904, Hildene was built and remained in the family's hands until the death of Robert's granddaughter, Mary Lincoln Beckwith, in 1975. Her will left the 412-acre estate to the Christian Science Church with the wish that it be preserved as a memorial to her grandparents. However, the will contains an escape clause allowing the church to

sell the estate if it is "impractical" to run the estate as an historical memorial.

The position of the Christian Science Church is simple. They consider themselves, according to Mr. Carl B. Rechner, Real Estate Consultant at the Christian Science Center in Boston, a "small but international church." They are not equipped to run historical memorials, and that is an enterprise which does not particularly fit their mainly religious objectives. They wish to follow the spirit of the will and will sell the property to any group which will operate the property as a memorial to the Lincolns. However, the property was appraised at \$612,000, and no group which wishes to operate the home as an historic property has that kind of money. Mr. Rechner said that the church offered to sell for \$400,000 and to "make terms" that would ease even that burden, but their offer has not been taken. They have been offered, \$200,000, which they refused. They feel that, if no group prepared to manage the property as a memorial offers to buy it for a reasonable price, that they are then free to sell to any other buyer for the next best use.

The Friends of Hildene, Inc., a group of over one hundred Manchester citizens anxious to save the mansion for historical purposes, is long on sentiment for the project and, understandably, short on funds. One major gift, says FOH president Robert Schmid, allowed them to make the \$200,000 offer. Since negotiations to close the gap between that and the church's figure have broken down, that offer has been withdrawn. The Friends of Hildene think that they have an excellent chance to save the estate through the courts. "News from the Friends of Hildene," a bulletin published by the organization, stated their case this way in April:

The FOH stand, buttressed by legal precedent and authority, is that the Church has not shown — and has made no good faith effort to establish — that to run Hildene as directed in the Will would be "impractical." Therefore,



*From the Louis A. Warren  
Lincoln Library and Museum*

**FIGURE 4.** Robert Todd Lincoln's portrait in the dining room of Hildene.



having failed to establish "impracticality," the Church is not free to sell the estate except to a buyer who will honor Miss Beckwith's memorial concept. In FOH's view "impracticality" *might* have been argued if the Beckwith Will had left no money to the Church as operating capital for the maintenance of a Hildene memorial. But the Will provides a specific fund of \$425,000. as endowment for this memorial purpose as well as "all the rest, residue, and remainder" of the estate after taxes and expenses have been paid. Thus, with . . . working capital and with full title to the land and buildings, . . . the Church must present convincing evidence — which has not been forthcoming — that it is "impractical" to maintain Hildene as a memorial.

The \$425,000 endowment was a fund set aside in Miss Beckwith's will for her servants. The servants are all deceased now, and in that contingency the money and the "rest and residue" of the estate after settlement were to go to the operation of the memorial. Mr. Schmid estimates the amount available for this purpose now at \$780,000 in cash, stocks, and bonds. A court fight is in the offing, the Church petitioning the courts for permission to sell Hildene on the open market and the Friends of Hildene "determined to prevent, by all legal means, the diversion of these resources from their intended purpose."

Hildene has been nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places by the Vermont State Division for Historic Preservation, which described it as a "magnificent example of Georgian revival architecture." Miss Kathryn Welch, planning officer for the Boston regional office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation noted:

The estate contains a multiplicity of artifacts, memorabilia, and archival materials, which would be of historical significance. Resources such as the papers and correspondence of Robert Todd Lincoln and the Lincoln-Beckwith families as well as the collection of artifacts should be evaluated for their content and significance relative to U.S. history, the history of the Lincoln-Beckwith family, and the more local history of the estate and the town of Manchester.

The home is in good physical condition, and Mr. Schmid says that the furnishings in the home are mostly the ones Robert Todd Lincoln acquired for it. Miss Beckwith, known locally as "Peg," lived in the house as it had been set up by her grand-

father. She bought very few furnishings herself. Some of the furnishings, however, go to Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, Miss Beckwith's brother, and he is currently distributing some of the items. Friends of Hildene have contacted him, however, and he has apparently agreed to leave certain very important pieces, like the grandfather clock, in the home.

When I asked Mr. Rechner for a description of the Church's position, he gave me in essence the position I described as the Church's above. He did not mention the endowment fund on which the Friends of Hildene place so much emphasis. Wanting to clarify the matter, I called the Church's associate counsel, Mr. Philip Hunt. He expressed some reluctance to discuss a matter of litigation at first, but he did consent to discuss the will a bit. The "so-called endowment" fund is "in there," he said, as a trust which was never set up because all the potential beneficiaries were deceased before they could benefit from it. Mr. Hunt's position is that, "endowment" fund or no, the whole question hinges on "the degree of discretion" Miss Beckwith desired the directors of the Church to have. The courts, he said, will look at the critical words in the will, which state that in the event the directors should determine the historical memorial purpose impractical, they could use the property to further the ends of religion as taught by Mary Baker Eddy. The will states that it is Miss Beckwith's "desire," but she does "not direct" that it be used for the historical purpose. She could have directed them to do so and left the property to someone else in the event that they did not wish to do so. The courts will have to interpret whether it is entirely up to the directors of the Church to decide the question of practicality. In the meantime, Lincoln enthusiasts will have to wait and watch anxiously or hope that some benefactor can close the gap between the Church's price for the property and the funds raised by the Friends of Hildene.

*Editor's Note:* Readers of the credits for photographs in recent issues will have noted the appearance of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. This is the new name for the Lincoln National Life Foundation. A future issue will deal with the renaming of the Foundation in honor of its first director and with the move of the facility to brand new quarters.

M. E. N., Jr.



From the Louis A. Warren  
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 5. Main entrance of Hildene.



## HILDENE BORN AGAIN

Robert Todd Lincoln's estate rededicated as a resource for the Northshire



## Hildene's 22 buildings as described in National Register of Historic Places

(Editors' note: The following description of the Hildene property is condensed from a nine-page document prepared by an architectural historian in nominating Hildene for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The property was inscribed in the Register in October, 1977.)

Hildene is situated on 412 acres of land located between the Battenkill River and River Road and extending from River Road westerly over one of the highest ridges in Manchester, toward Route 7. There are two private access roads into the westerly section in which the mansion is located. The property contains a total of 22 structures and amenities... The main dwelling, built in 1904, is situated at the high point of the ridge, commanding unexcelled panoramic views of Equinox Mountain to the west and the Green Mountains to the south and east... The farm buildings along River Road date from the early 19th century and have been used in conjunction

with the estate since the time Lincoln purchased the property. The estate's buildings and property are all in remarkably good condition and continue to portray the turn of the century grandeur and exclusiveness. (See page 2, this issue, for detailed Hildene map.)

The **Main Dwelling** is a Georgian Revival style mansion house situated at the end of a one-mile tree-lined driveway... The structure consists of a two and a half story center section with a hipped roof and two hipped wings, each two stories... The first floor interior contains a very formal entry foyer with a multi-spindled staircase leading to the second floor, forming a balcony level in intricate cabinets. The library has an elaborate fireplace built into a mahogany panel wall, and across the foyer is the dining room with an ornately decorated panel wall and fireplace. Through the dining room is a large pantry and kitchen in which a large wood and coal-burning stove remains. The other first floor rooms include R.T.

Lincoln's study with a fireplace and a file room; his bedroom and bath; a guest room and bath; and a servants' dining room.

The second floor, east wing, contains four servants' rooms, a bath, and a linen, china, and silver room with floor-to-ceiling locked cabinets. The central section and west wing contain two bedrooms with complete baths, two bedrooms with a connecting bath, and a master bedroom with fireplace.

The attic is one large room lit by dormers. It is insulated against the roof and has ventilated soffits. The basement contains two hot air furnaces and is sectioned into a number of rooms with finished plaster walls. An elevator runs from the basement to the attic for passenger and material use; originally it operated by a rope pull, but it has since been electrified.

The **Studio**, a few steps to the east of the mansion, is a five-room one-story structure that was used by Miss ("Peggy")

(Continued on Page 3)

When title to the historic estate was transferred from the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston to Friends of Hildene, Inc. on Friday, July 28, 1978, Robert Todd Lincoln's Hildene, his "ancestral home" in Manchester, Vermont, entered upon what its friends hope will be a noble second career. After three-quarters of a century as the private domain of the direct descendants of Abraham Lincoln, Hildene is to become an historic site open to the public and an educational and cultural resource for the Northshire and the state of Vermont. On Saturday, August 5, this transformation was confirmed and celebrated at Hildene's Dedication Day. (See page 4 for Dedication Day details)

The task of preserving Hildene began in July 1976 at a meeting of townspeople convened by Henry Lambert, Manchester town manager. The Christian Science Church had inherited the 412-acre estate in 1975 under the will of Mary Lincoln "Peggy" Beckwith, great-granddaughter of Abraham Lincoln and granddaughter of Robert Todd Lincoln. (See page 3 for Lincoln Family Tree.) Miss Beckwith's will expressed the hope that the property would be administered as a memorial, but the church was authorized to sell the estate if it found that to be "impractical". Having, indeed, found the administration of a Lincoln memorial impractical, the church offered to sell the property at substantially less than its \$650,000 appraised value to a non-profit community group. It was this offer that led to the formation of Friends of Hildene.

FOH grew rapidly after the first meeting in the town office building in July 1976. Business and professional men and women joined the group and donated their services. An anonymous donor offered a gift of \$200,000 toward the purchase of the historic estate. Legal briefs were prepared, foundation grants secured, and the handful of founders grew to a membership of 350. In June 1978, a declaratory judgement by Superior Court Judge Edwin H. Amidon confirmed the sale of the property by the church to FOH. The selling price, set at \$200,000, constituted in effect a gift of \$450,000 from

## Who are these

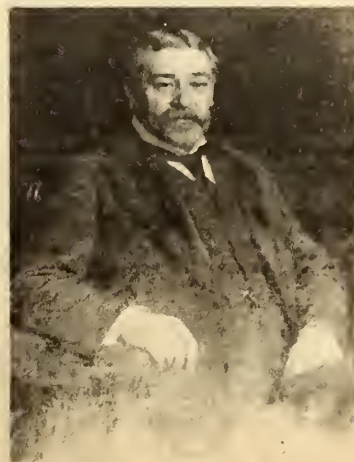
## Friends of Hildene?

The new managers of the Hildene estate, who like the acronym FOH, are a Manchester-based non-profit association formed just under two years ago. FOH has as its purpose "the creation of a living memorial to Robert Todd Lincoln and his family through restoration of the Hildene estate and opening it to the public as an educational and cultural resource."

FOH is incorporated under Vermont law and is a tax-exempt organization under Paragraph 501-c-3 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. All contributions to FOH are fully deductible for federal income tax purposes.

Requirements for membership in Friends of Hildene are two: an expressed interest in the purposes of the society and payment of annual dues of at least \$5. Up to 15 trustees are elected at the organization's annual membership meeting in August, each member in good standing eligible to cast one vote. Trustees elect their own officers, set and

(Continued on Page 4)



Portrait of Robert Todd Lincoln hangs in the dining room.

the church to the Friends of Hildene, who now own the property free and clear. (See "Historic Hildene" description on pages 1 and 3)

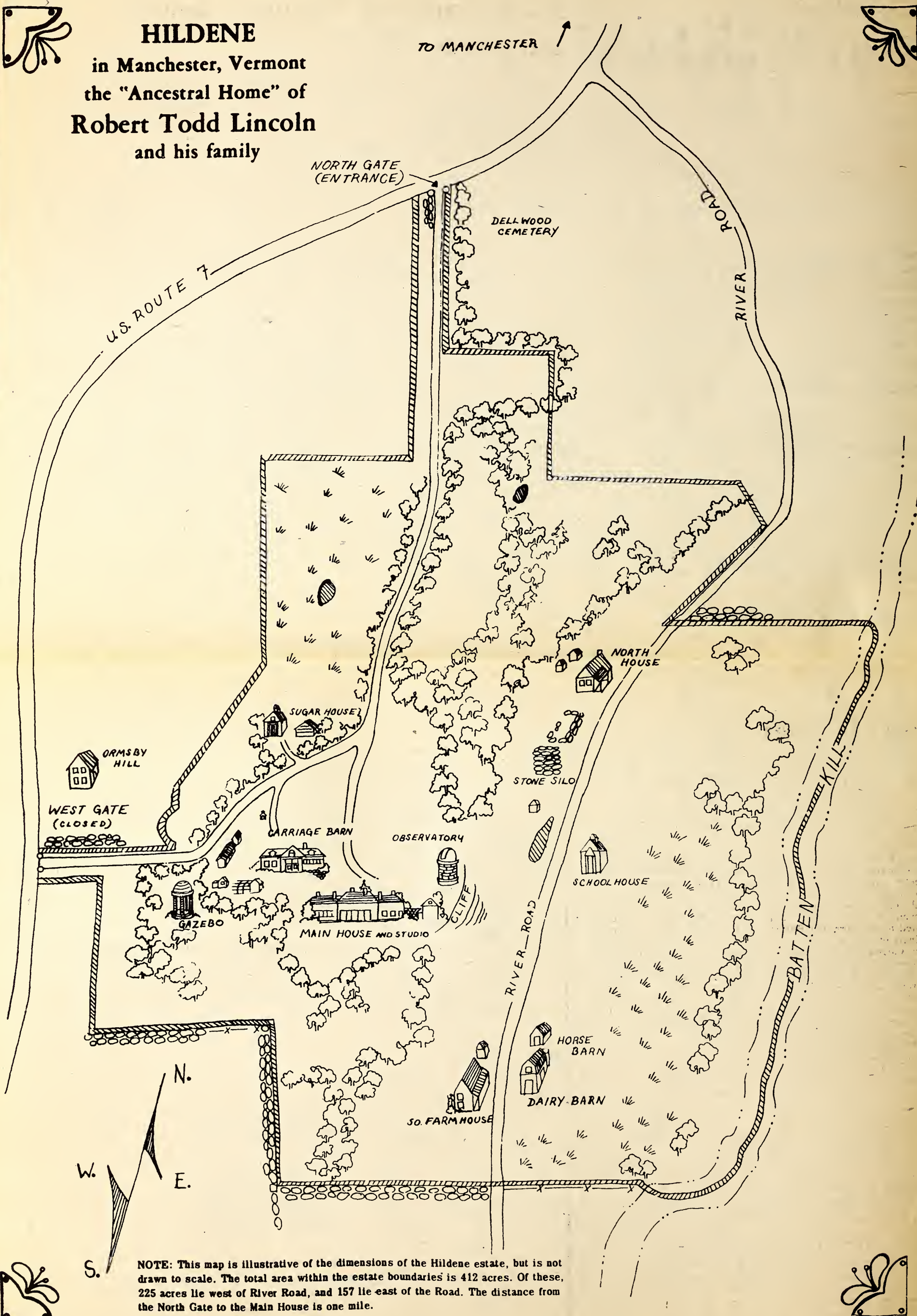
Planning for the transformation of Hildene into a financially viable non-profit institution available for use by the visiting public and the community began in 1976, and by 1978 planning and feasibility study grants totaling \$5,000 had been received. They came from the Eva Gebhard-Gourgaud Foundation, Mr. Robert A. Sincerbeaux president, (\$2,000); The National Trust for Historic Preservation, Ms. Kathryn Welch, director New England Field Office (\$1,000); and the Division of Historic Preservation, State of Vermont, Mr. William Pinney director, (\$2,000). Aided by professional consultants funded by these planning grants, Hildene's trustees and advisory board are now carefully studying a wide array of program options. Their goal is "to find the unique combination of uses that will generate maximum direct benefits to the community while at the same time guaranteeing the financial viability of the estate; all of this in ways that respect the dignity of Hildene's history and tradition."

"At this point we cannot predict which of a number of avenues will become our main approach to financial stability", one FOH trustee said recently. "Once we have prepared the main house and grounds for it, the opening of Hildene to fee-paying tourist visitors could produce considerable annual income. And we shall in any case need an endowment fund for income purposes, and capital funds too. But we are also looking for a productive use of the property that would sustain it without detracting from its natural beauty or its role as a memorial to the Lincoln family name. We will move carefully as we approach these decisions, and as we do so, we will welcome assistance from all sides -- in the form of ideas and in the form of money, the latter being fully tax deductible." (See Membership Drive, page 3)



# HILDENE

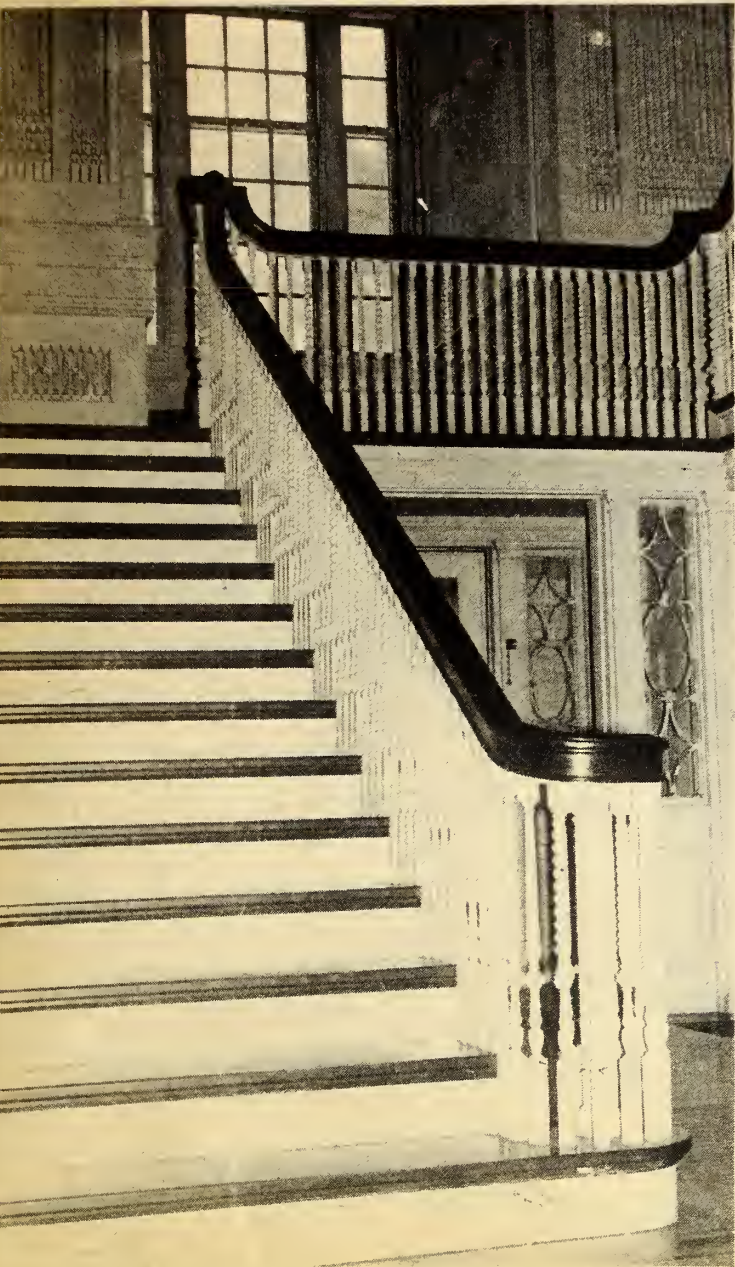
in Manchester, Vermont  
the "Ancestral Home" of  
Robert Todd Lincoln  
and his family



NOTE: This map is illustrative of the dimensions of the Hildene estate, but is not drawn to scale. The total area within the estate boundaries is 412 acres. Of these, 225 acres lie west of River Road, and 157 lie east of the Road. The distance from the North Gate to the Main House is one mile.



Grand staircase



This staircase, with its intricately carved bannister, rises from the center hall at Hildene.

Hildene's 22 buildings

(Continued from Page 1)

Beckwith as a studio in the early 1930's. The roof is hipped and clad with slate shingles, with a skylight in the north slope.

An **Observatory** is located near the studio on the edge of the cliff overlooking the Battenkill River Valley. It is a brick cylinder approximately eight feet in diameter with a rotating wood and canvas hemispherical roof on metal wheels. The telescope was removed in the 1920's and donated to the Burr and Burton Seminary in Manchester.

The **Carriage Barn**, 200 yards southwest of the mansion, is a one and one-half story structure generally corresponding to the format of the main house. On the east side of the first floor is a large room for carriages and to the west is the stable area with several horse stalls and more recently added cattle stanchions. The second floor area contains a spacious estate manager's apartment.

In the vicinity of the Carriage Barn are a number of outbuildings, some of them in disrepair: a large **Potting Shed**, a nearby **Greenhouse**, a **Garden Tool House**, a **Carpenter's Shed**, a **Pony Barn**, an octagonal **Gazebo**, a **Wagon Shed**, and an **Ice House**. The latter building was most recently used as a Sugar House.

The **North Farm House** on the River Road is a two and one-half story house with a central chimney dating from 1800. Associated with the North Farm is a **Corn Crib**, **Garage**, **Stone Silo**, and **Machine Storage Barn**.

The **Schoolhouse**, on the east side of River Road, was built around 1840 and has been used only for storage since it was last

used for instruction -- probably in the 1890's.

The **Main Farm House**, south of the School House, consists of two 36' by 24' one and one-half story Greek Revival farm houses joined by a 24' one-story section. One of the houses dates from the 1830's. Across the road is the **Main Farm Horse Barn**, 27' by 36' containing built-in horse stalls. Adjoining is the **Main Farm Dairy Barn** of two and one-half levels, 70' by 30' with an attached tongue and groove silo. Both barns date from about 1890.

The Hildene estate is a well preserved example of an extravagant and exclusive summer residence built at the turn of the century. It is significant a) in that it was built for Robert Todd Lincoln and remained in his family until 1975; b) in the excellent proportions of the Georgian Revival mansion designed by Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge; and in that it represents a way of life which is diminishing in our present society and culture.

At the time Hildene was built, wealthy clients were commissioning such lavish summer homes at various points on the East Coast, the best known assemblage at Newport, Rhode. These clients, through the showcase nature of their residences, influenced the course of American domestic architecture to no small degree. The styles chosen by the wealthy eventually filtered down to less affluent builders and became more pervasive, though emulation by the middle class. Hildene is one of the grander examples of this style in Vermont, and represents a period which was perhaps the high point of individual conspicuous consumption in architecture...

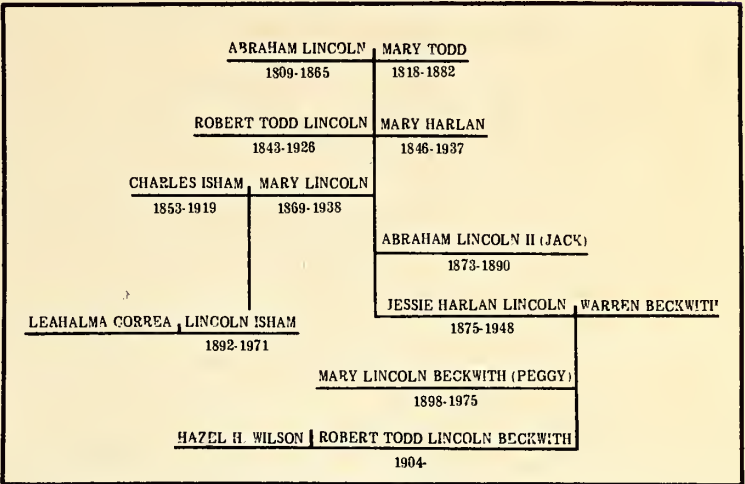
The Lincolns in Vermont: names and places

Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln had four children, all boys, only one of whom lived to adulthood. He was Robert Todd Lincoln. Born in 1843, he had graduated from Harvard and was serving on General Grant's staff in the Union Army when his father was assassinated in 1865.

Robert Lincoln became a distinguished American statesman, lawyer, and business man in his own right. He was Secretary of War in the cabinets of Presidents Garfield and Arthur in the early 1880's, and he later served for four years as Ambassador to Great Britain. Skilled in the field of corporate law, he became counsel to and later president and chief executive officer of the Pullman Company. He never sought political office, although he was repeatedly urged to become a candidate for the presidency of the United States.

It was during his father's presidency that Robert Lincoln's first visit to Vermont occurred, just before his senior year at Harvard. In the company of his mother and Mrs. Abner Doubleday, wife of the founder of baseball, Robert Lincoln took a trip through New England that brought them to Manchester. The trio took rooms in the north wing of Equinox of House on August 25 and spent two weeks touring the area. The Lincolns returned to Manchester in 1864 and made plans for a third visit in 1865, this time bringing the President with them. But this was not to be.

In 1902 Robert Lincoln bought the land that was to make up the Hildene estate, and the main house was completed two years later. Some of the land was sold to him by his close friend and law partner Edward Swift Isham, who had a summer estate at nearby Ormsby Hill on what is now Route 7. Lincoln first occupied Hildene in 1904, and he spent the months



The Lincoln Family Tree

of May through November there for the next 22 years. He died at Hildene in July 1926.

According to his biographer, John Goff, the years at Hildene were among the happiest of Lincoln's life. He was an active golfer and one of the founding members of the Ekwanok Country Club in Manchester, serving as its president for more than two decades. With a keen interest in mathematics and astronomy, he built an observatory at Hildene and installed in it a powerful telescope that he used often and was fond of demonstrating to his friends.

Lincoln was a trustee and benefactor of Manchester's Mark Skinner Library and according to town reports was active in local charities. He became a semi-invalid in his later years, and did not often appear in public. At his death his body was temporarily interred at Dellwood Cemetery before it was transferred to Arlington National Cemetery in Washington.

**The Lincoln Women**

Hildene, after Lincoln's death in 1926, became the domain of the Lincoln women. Mary Harlan Lincoln, Robert Lincoln's wife for 58 years, continued to live at Hildene until her death in 1937. She was a devout Christian Scientist and left much of her fortune to the Christian Science Church. This foreshadowed her granddaughter's gift of Hildene itself to the same church 38 years later.

The widowed Mary Lincoln Isham, one of Robert Lincoln's two daughters, became mistress of Hildene in 1937 and she undertook some redecorating of the main house, but she died only a year later, and the estate was then handed down to Mary Lincoln Beckwith, daughter of Jessie Lincoln (Beckwith) Randolph, who was Robert Lincoln's second daughter. (See Lincoln Family Tree, above.)

**MARY LINCOLN BECKWITH**

Mary Lincoln Beckwith, who preferred the nickname Peggy

(Continued on Page 4)

FOH MEMBERSHIPS: KEY SUPPORT FOR RESTORATION

Now that FOH has acquired the Lincoln estate, the danger that these 412 acres of woodland and pasture along nearly a mile of the winding Battenkill, would be subdivided and suburbanized is past. The land will remain open, and the great house on the hill will not be razed.

The task of **FRIENDS of HILDENE** now is to alert the people of the Northshire and beyond to the need for funds to:

- RESTORE** the original Lincoln furnishings and renovate the rooms so that they can be shown to the public ...
- CREATE** in one wing of Hildene the Only Robert Todd Lincoln Museum in America ...
- RETURN** the grounds and gardens to their turn-of-the century bloom...
- RECREATE** Hildene's woodland trails and wildlife sanctuary ...
- PRESERVE** untouched the quiet reaches of the Battenkill and the wetlands nearby ...
- DISCOVER** new uses for the Carriage Barn, the Studio, the School House, the Farm Houses and Barns, and the Observatory, and the Main House itself ...

JOIN NOW! SUPPORT THE CONTINUING EFFORT TO RESTORE HILDENE! ENROLL TODAY AS A MEMBER OF FOH

YES! I want to be a member of **FRIENDS of HILDENE, INC.** Enclosed is my TAX DEDUCTIBLE membership contribution of:

- |              |                          |                  |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Life Member  | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$5,000. or more |
| Benefactor   | <input type="checkbox"/> | \$1,000.         |
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AND MAIL TO MANCHESTER, VERMONT 05254  
Telephone 802-362-1788



## HISTORIC HILDENE Dedication Day Program

August 5, 1978

AT 12 O'CLOCK NOON

1. Opening Remarks: David C. Sheldon
2. Invocation: Rev. Jerome J. Hevey
3. Introduction of Special Guests: Robert Schmid
4. Dedication Speech: John G. Simson
5. Conclusion: Salute to Historic Hildene and Her Noble New Career



ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S HILDENE  
in Manchester, Vermont

### The Lincolns

(Continued from Page 3)  
and who never married, was living in her own house at Bullhead Pond when she inherited the Lincoln estate and she moved to Hildene in 1938. She lived there, with her mother at first and then alone, until her death in 1975. The Peggy Beckwith period in Hildene's history contrasts in many ways with the staid bourgeois pattern of the elder Lincolns' decades there. Miss Beckwith was a lively, creative woman barely forty years old when she became mistress of 412-acre estate. She had studied watercolor under Eliot O'Hara in Washington D.C., and she continued painting in water colors and oils until the last years of her life. Other areas of the arts also claimed her attention: she worked at sculpture, in wood and clay, and she studied piano, the guitar, and musical composition.

But her interests ranged widely. She loved automobiles, machinery, wildlife, animals, and nature. At the same time that she

was active in the Southern Vermont Art Center she was learning to fly the Stearman biplane that she kept at her hangar and landing strip on River Road. Her days often started with milking cows and other rural chores as she strove to increase the productivity of Hildene's farms, particularly during World War II. Original, outspoken, and full of ideas and opinions, Peggy Beckwith was nevertheless a shy person who shunned public appearances. One of her rare trips outside Manchester came in 1960 when she accepted the U.S. Navy's invitation to launch a new warship: the nuclear-powered submarine Abraham Lincoln.

Frequent visitors at Hildene, over the years, were two other direct descendents of Abraham Lincoln: Lincoln Isham, who lived in Dorset and whose mother had had brief dominion over the Hildene estate in 1937-38; and Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, Miss Beckwith's younger brother. Lincoln Isham died in 1971, and Mr. Beckwith, the last of the Lincoln line, lives in Washington, D.C.



View of the garden from an upstairs window

### Friends of Hildene

(Continued from Page 1)  
monitor policy, and supervise staff. Current members of the board of trustees are Jean Bischoff, Oscar Johnson, (vice-president), Gerald Keneally, Arthur O'Dea, (secretary), Romi Perkins, Robert Schmid, (president), Judy Taylor, Robert Thum, (treasurer), and Henry van Loon.

To assist them, the trustees have appointed twelve prominent Northshire men and women to the newly created FOH Advisory Board. They are: Stig Albertsson, President of Big Bromley Corporation; Mary Bort, President of the Manchester Historical Society; John Chapin, a Manchester Townlift Committeeman and State Finance Chairman of the Vermont Republican Party; Malcolm Cooper, owner of J.K. Adams in Dorset; The Reverend Jerome Hevey, Jr.; pastor of the First Congregational Church in Manchester; John Kennedy, assistant vice-president of the Rutland Savings Bank and manager of its Manchester Branch; Clint Lewis, owner and manager of the Jelly Mill in Manchester; Marshall Peck, publisher of the Vermont News Guide; Tony Perry, owner of the Sirloin Saloon, Inc., and member of the Manchester Planning Commission; John Trethaway, owner of Manchester Hardware and Chairman of the Manchester and the Mountains Chamber of Commerce; Gerald Wilcox, a dairy farmer; and Dr. Ilsey S. Zecher, President of the Southern Vermont Art Center.

FOH staff consists of Executive

Director David C. Sheldon, Buildings and Grounds Superintendent Kenneth Hill, Office Manager Kathy Griffis, Admini-

strative Assistant Clemont Tudor, and Assistant Buildings and Grounds Superintendent Edgar Hill.



Little Red School House

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BUT YOU DID IT!

CONGRATULATIONS  
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Johnson's Fuel Service, Inc.  
Manchester Center, Vt.





*Christmas at Hildene*

Dec 18, 1978

Dear Mr. Neely:

Merry Christmas from Hildeve!  
I will be calling you in January to  
see if you could be with us, probably  
around July 4<sup>th</sup>, to speak at our  
Grand Opening ceremonies.

We are enjoying Lincoln lore —  
and we continue to learn more about  
RTL every day.

Sincerely,  
Dave Stuller



*Robert Todd Lincoln's*  
**HILDENE**



Mr. Mark E. Neely, Jr.,  
Director,  
The Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum,  
1300 South Clinton St.,  
Fort Wayne, Ind., 46801

Dear Mr. Neely:

This is a much delayed reply to your kind letter of May 3, but I know that David Sheldon, executive director of Hildene, has been in touch with you about the toy soldiers and has also had confirmation of your participation in our formal opening ceremonies on July 4. We are delighted that you can come and I am looking forward to meeting you.

Meanwhile I have tried to find out what I could about the soldiers. You certainly have our permission to write an article about them for your bulletin, Lincoln Lore, and if we have not already run something about them perhaps you'd let us reprint it in a later issue of our quarterly news letter. And we shall be glad to arrange to have photos made for you.

I am afraid that we have no documentary evidence that any of the soldiers--and there are some 140 pieces in all--belonged to Robert Lincoln personally, though nearly all of them were found in the Hildene house and they must have been among the toys that Robert Lincoln's grandchildren played with when they visited their grandparents during the summers. Lincoln lived here from 1905 until his death in 1926 and his widow continued to spend summers here until her death in 1938. There were three grandchildren: Lincoln Isham (1892-1971), Mary Lincoln (Peggy) Beckwith (1898-1975) and Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, born in 1904 and now living in Washington, D. C.

There is one box of eight lead soldiers, about three inches tall and in gray dress uniform with blue caps, obviously representing Union troops in the Civil War period. They were recently presented to Hildene by Mr. and Mrs. Ogden Pleissner of Dorset, with a note saying they were Civil War soldiers which had belonged to Robert Lincoln. Mrs. Pleissner told me that she had been a good friend of Lincoln Isham, son of Mary Lincoln Isham (a distant relative of Robert Lincoln's law partner, Edward Swift Isham). He lived in Dorset and Mrs. Pleissner said he had a whole table full of lead soldiers in his studio there, which she thought he had inherited from his grandfather. He gave this set to her as a gift.

The largest and most elaborate set--63 men and 14 horses--was recently mounted on a cloth-covered board by Warren Frank, of Manchester. It

includes a 16-piece band plus a conductor, 17 armed infantrymen, one of whom carries an American flag, four mounted horsemen, one of whom is blowing a bugle, several wagons pulled by teams of two or four horses, a cannon, two stacks of stacked arms and a group around a campfire. One of the latter is sitting on a log eating from a dish and another, also on a log, is reading what appears to be either a dispatch or a newspaper. All in all it is quite a complete scene. The men wear red coats, blue trousers and either caps or helmets of blue, with gold plumes on some of the helmets. Just what period they represent I don't know. The men are about two inches tall.

In another box there are 17 soldiers, three sailors and six Indians lying prone with bows and arrows aimed at the enemy. Also 18 horses and a cannon. These are about the same size as the larger set--that is, the height of the men.

Down in the Bennington Museum are a number of toys on loan from Hildene. Among them are a half dozen Rough Riders, some of them mounted. They are five or six inches tall.

I wish I were able to give you more precise information as to the original ownership of these military units and their date. It is possible that some books on toy soldiers or "collectibles" could help on this matter. The local library couldn't turn up anything for me but said it could inquire of other libraries.

It is planned to house the soldiers and other toys in a children's room at Hildene and I think they will make quite an attractive exhibit. There is an early Meccano set, a nice set of small plastic farm and zoo animals, an old Teddy bear, an old-fashioned wooden sled with iron runners, and various other items, most of them in quite good condition.

If we can be of further help on your project please let us know.

Sincerely,

  
Steven M. Spencer

CC: David Sheldon

P. S. We have just learned that Robert Beckwith once said some of these soldiers were his and that he made lead soldiers from mold he had as a child. Beckwith is not well and we hesitate to bother him about this but you might talk to Ralph Newman about it. I'm sure you know him. His address is 175 East Delaware Place, Chicago, Ill., 60611. Mrs. Sheila Foster, West Road, Manchester, can make the photos for you in either color or black and white. We can arrange it if you wish.



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86 Antique Auctions

190 Shows & Flea Markets

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Week of May 10-15

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(Coupon on Page 56)

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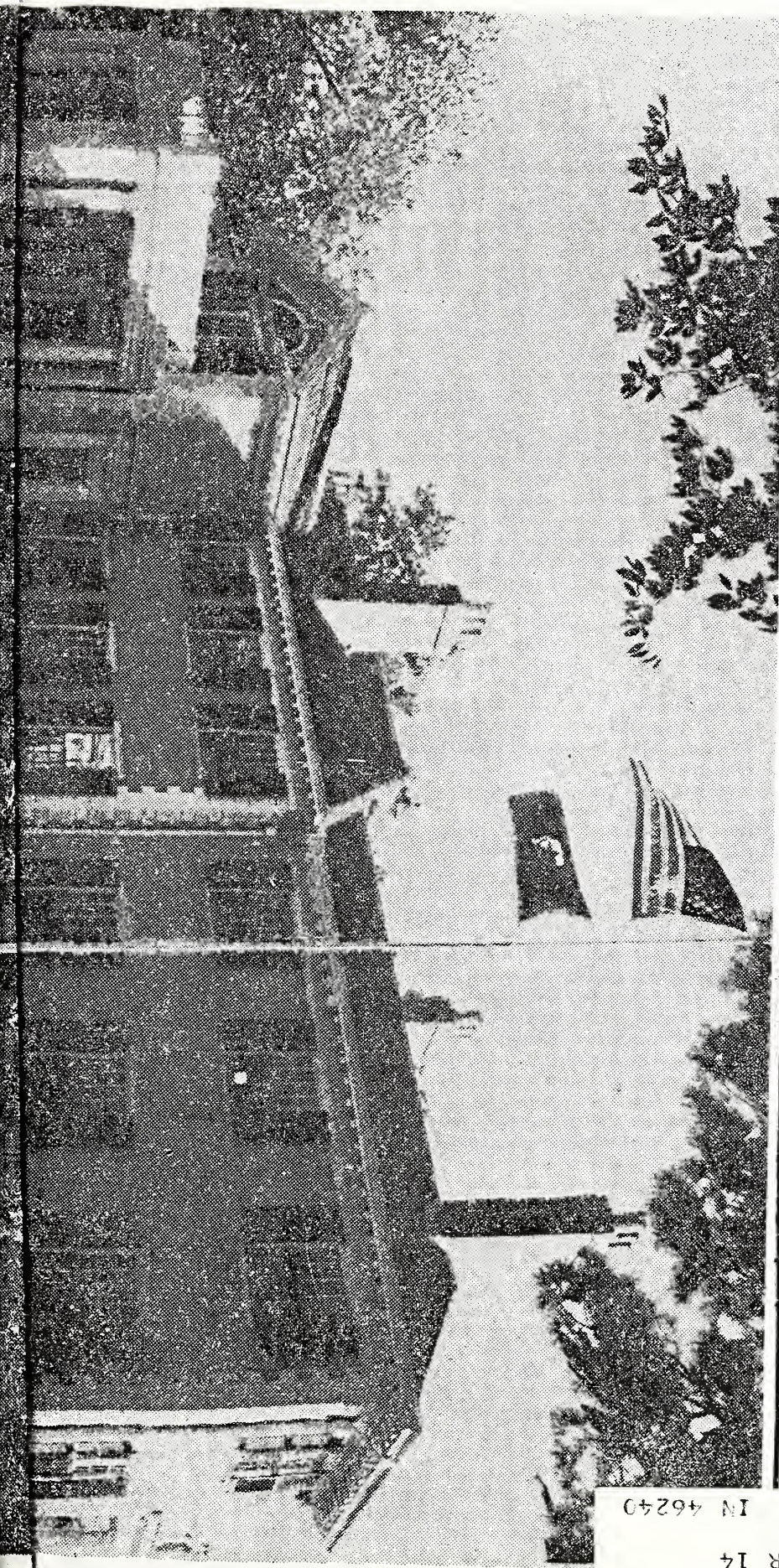
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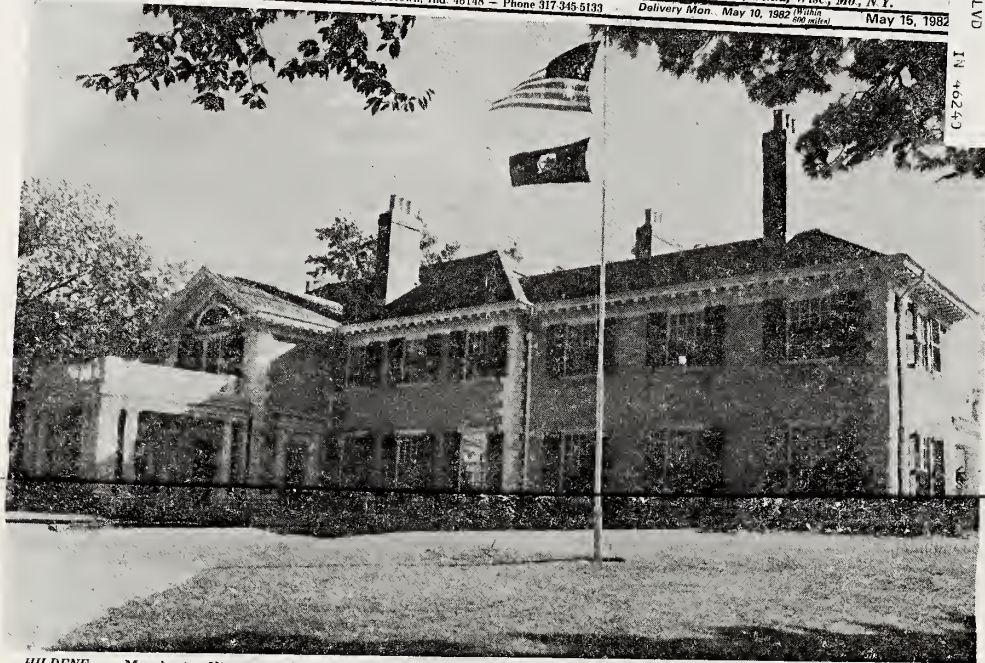
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# TRI-STATE TRADER

Weekly Antique, Auction & Collectors' Newspaper for Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, western Pa., W. Va., Tenn., Wisc., Mo., N.Y.  
 Vol. 15, No. 6 (Whole 696) 2nd Class Postage Paid at Knightstown, Ind. 46148 - Phone 317-345-5133 Delivery Mon. May 10, 1982 (within 100 miles) May 15, 1982 (ISSN 0041-2503)



**HILDENE** near Manchester, Vt., was the family home of Abraham Lincoln's son Robert Todd Lincoln. It was also the home of Lincoln's grand-

daughter Mary Beckwith. The home and 500 acre land site is now open to the public.

## Lincoln Memories Live On At Hildene

BY WILLIAM ANDERSON

In 1902, when a Chicago businessman named Lincoln bought nearly 500 acres of wooded land among the mountains of southern Vermont, residents of the resort town of Manchester scarcely lifted an eyebrow.

They were accustomed to visits of prosperous — and sometimes famous — "summer people" who sought quiet vistas among the cool green hills and valleys. Anonymity and peace were exactly what Mr. Lincoln of Illinois was seeking.

Approaching his sixties at the turn of the century, Robert Todd Lincoln had spent all his adulthood as a reluctant lion, attempting to downplay his role as the only surviving offspring of a famous father, President Abraham Lincoln.

As a millionaire attorney, capable statesman and successful business magnate, Robert Lincoln had never rid-

den on his father's glory to accomplish his considerable niche in post-Civil War America.

He had forged his own way through Harvard, served on General Grant's staff at the close of the Civil War and eventually became Secretary of War under Garfield and Minister to Great Britain from 1889-1893. Those last two posts were the closest Lincoln ventured into the political arena, frequent suggestions of another Lincoln occupying the White House brought polite, but adamant refusals from the man in question.

In 1897, Robert Todd Lincoln was appointed president of the Pullman Palace Car Company, the General Motors of its day. At the height of his corporate career, Lincoln had a 22-room Georgian Revival mansion built on the Vermont acreage he called his "ancestral home."

Officially, the estate was named "Hildene" — meaning "hill and valley", and

there Robert Lincoln spent his happiest years, playing the role of country esquire, senior statesman, genial host and avid golfer. When he died in 1926, at the age of 82, Robert Todd Lincoln had created his own legend in Manchester.

That Lincoln legend in Vermont — far from the log cabin origins of the 16th president — has recently been rekindled and is flourishing among the Green Mountains. Robert Lincoln's Hildene remained in his family until 1975, but has now passed on to friends — specifically, "The Friends of Hildene", a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the Lincoln family home and the gracious way of life they lived in Vermont.

The complicated chain of events which led to the development of the project is perhaps as interesting historically as any of the stories that surround the Lincoln family.

After Robert Lincoln's death, the

acreage and potpourri of 22 buildings on the estate passed to his survivors, ultimately to become the domain of Lincoln granddaughter Mary Beckwith. Miss Beckwith, who loved the country settings as much as her grandparents had, lived contentedly at Hildene until her death in 1975 — and then the future of the Lincoln home was in jeopardy.

By terms of Miss Beckwith's will, Hildene became the property of the Christian Science Church, with the stipulation that it be administered as a memorial to the descendants of Abraham Lincoln. The Church, less than eager to operate an historic attraction, offered it for sale, and at that point, a group of Manchester residents formed "The Friends of Hildene."

Fearing subdivision of the Lincoln land, razing of the mansion and various other fates, the Friends had no plan, no support and no funds. They did have a

(continued on page 35)

## "Don't Forget" L. David Couden Presents "Past To Present" Antique Show & Sale

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 2811 E. 10th St., Indianapolis, Ind. 46201

(P. 16)

## Mason Antiques Market

## MASON, MICHIGAN

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Rain or Shine Inside & Outside - Picnic Area

Sat., May 15, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

For info. call MAPLE BUNCH, Mgr. 313-779-3416 or 313-465-0224 (eves.) (P. 16)



# EDITOR'S NOTES

By Robert Reed

## Still Another Interesting Story On Abraham Lincoln

English professor John F. Wilhelm of California State University has turned up still another interesting story about Abraham Lincoln.

Wilhelm's research indicates California journalist Noah Brooks was the last person to interview the president just hours before his assassination.

In an article for the *Sacramento (Calif.) Union* recently, professor Wil-

helm said the interview took place on the afternoon of April 14, 1865.

He quotes Brooks' writings regarding the event, "I filled an appointment by calling on the president at the White House and was told by him that he 'had a notion' of sending for me to go to the theater that evening with him and Mrs. Lincoln; but he added that Mrs. Lincoln had already made up a party to take the

place of General and Mrs. Grant who had unexpectedly left the city for Burlington, N.J."

The journalist, in his writings, went on to quote Lincoln again as they stood on the front porch of the White House:

"Grant thinks that we can reduce the cost of the Army established at least a half million a day, which with the reduction of expenditures of the Navy, will soon bring down our national debt to something like decent proportions, and bring our national paper up to a par, or nearly so, with gold."

Brooks reported that the president and Mrs. Lincoln then drove off without any guard or escort.

The California journalist maintained, according to Wilhelm's findings, that Lincoln's decision to attend Ford's Theater to see a performance of "Our American Cousin" was made because the morning papers had already announced the Lincoln and the Grants would be going to the theater that night.

Wilhelm's article draws more from the writings of journalist Brooks and includes a morbid but interesting passage a few days after the president's death.

Apparently Brooks was able to gain

entrance to the Capitol rotunda where Lincoln's body lay in state. Wilhelm observed he somehow managed to elude a vast number of sentries and climb the winding stairs to the top of the rotunda and described this scene:

"Looking down from that lofty point, the sight was weird and memorable. Beneath me lay the casket in which the dead president lay at full length far, far below; and, like black atoms moving over a sheet of gray paper, the slow moving mourners crept silently in two dark lines across the pavement of the rotunda."

Brooks continued a long and successful career in journalism, writing for various California newspapers, authoring books and doing some world traveling. He died in Pasadena, Calif., on Aug. 16, 1903 at the age of 73 and was buried in his home town of Castine, Maine.

### \*\*\*\*\*

#### "ROSEBUD"

For you trivia buffs, Rosebud is the name of the sled in the famous American film, "Citizen Kane."

Recently Sotheby's auction gallery in New York disclosed the original sled

(continued on page 56)

## This Week

AUTO ALBUM rides again this time featuring the 1935 Coleman ..... Page 6

ANTIQUE WISE takes a look at good old Mickey Mouse ..... Page 7

AUCTIONS are detailed from many parts of the country ..... Page 9

QUESTION BOX fields some interesting answers for readers ..... Page 10

Antq. Shop Directory Page 12

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Auctions Page 24

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For Sale, Wanted Ads Page 52

Genealogy Week Page 44

Pattern Glass Page 8

Shows, Flea Markets Page 12

## TRI-STATE TRADER

27 N. Jefferson, P.O. Box 90

Knightstown, Indiana 46148

Published weekly except for Christmas week by Mayhill Publications

Second Class Postage Paid at Knightstown, Ind. 46148

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Tri-State Trader, P.O. Box 90, Knightstown, IN 46148

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This is \$17.10 less than the annual newsstand price.

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**BEFORE 9 A.M. THURS.** - Ads postmarked or sent by courier on Wednesday are accepted with a surcharge (see chart below). If ad is reserved by phone on Wednesday, surcharge is less.

**AFTER 9 A.M. THURS.** - Any ad received after 9 a.m. may be limited to 1/4 page only as space and time permit. (See surcharge in chart below). Be sure and call please.

**BEFORE 8:30 A.M. FRI.** - Any ad received Thursday evening or early Friday will be limited to 1/4 page, no matter when mailed and subject to surcharges below. Be sure and reserve all late ads and mail by Gelco or other courier service or special delivery.

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698	May 19	May 14	May 17
699	May 26	May 21	May 24
700	June 2	June 4	Tues. June 1

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Advertising is cash with order or furnish good references. 40¢ billing charge is added and finance charge of 2% per mo. is added if not paid in 10 days or by 15th of next month, if a regular advertiser.

**\*NOTE** - Our page length is 2 inches deeper than many papers! Hence, our pages are 14% bigger.

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And you thought collectors of old autographs were in it just for the sense of history.

One autograph dealer in Nevada wants \$14 billion for a 200-year-old note, and he is calling up the U.S. government on its debt.

The note was issued to Haym Salomon on March 27, 1792, by Robert Morse, superintendent of finance for the revolutionary government of the struggling nation-to-be. Salomon had loaned our side about \$30,000 for the war effort.

Todd Axelrod, owner of the Nevada Museum for Historical Documents, purchased the Salomon note a year ago. He claims that the note plus other loans by Salomon to the U.S. government total

\$700,000, and were never repaid.

Axelrod says the loans depleted Salomon's entire fortune, and amounted to about 35 percent of the entire revolutionary war budget.

Axelrod said he hasn't been able to locate any heirs of Salomon, but attorneys have advised him the note is payable to bearer. One thing may stand in the way of his collecting his \$14 billion claim, though — the statute of limitations runs out on the debt more than 150 years ago.

The aggressive collector says that the \$30,000 loan, at seven percent interest, would amount to about \$14 billion in 200 years, clearly keeping ahead of inflation. — kt

## PUBLIC AUCTION Sat., May 15, 10:30 am

National Guard Armory

### DELPHI, IND. (17 mi. N.E. of LAFAYETTE)

#### GREENTOWN GLASS & WESTWARD HO COMPOTE

Several pieces of chocolate Greentown including leaf bracket covered butter, leaf bracket covered sugar, leaf bracket spooner, leaf bracket creamer, leaf bracket nappie, leaf bracket salt shaker, dolphin w/o lid, cactus syrup, cactus tumbler, cactus cracker jar w/o lid, cord drapery syrup jug w/metal lid; cactus syrup jug w/metal lid; sm. cactus compote; scalloped phalange vase, Herrington bowl, leaf bracket open creamer & sugar, Dewey berry bowl & chocolate outdoor drinking scene mug; amber Dewey water set; amber Dewey butter; amber Dewey berry set; amber Dewey punch cup; green Dewey open sugar; canary Dewey parfait; blue teacup & saucer; clear teacup & saucer covered butter; clear leaf bracket footed bowl; canary Dewey covered butter; clear cord drapery relish; clear cord drapery creamer; 4 clear cord drapery saucers; 2 clear cord drapery punch cups; 2 clear shuttle wines; blue troubadour mug; blue serenade mug; white serenade mug; emerald green Knight pattern mug; other pcs. of Greentown; Westward Ho 8" high stand and compote; art glass vase.

#### CARNIVAL DEPRESSION. CUT GLASS & OTHER GLASS

Several pieces of Grape & Cable purple amethyst carnival glass including punch bowl & 6 cups, 3 legged bowl marked Northwood, ice cream bowl, compote, hatpin holder, double handled candy dish marked Northwood, banana bowl, spooner marked Northwood, dresser tray, cookie jar, fernery bowl, card tray, tobacco jar signed Rose Presnick (souvenir); blue Grape & Cable footed bowl; 9 pc. green carnival singing birds water set; 7 pc. amethyst blackberry pattern carnival water set marked Northwood; 7 pc. cobalt blue orange tree pattern carnival water set; orange tree pattern powder jar; cobalt blue grape & cable footed bowl marked Northwood; green pattern peacock & grapes flat bowl; blue peacock & urn fluted bowl; 3 fruits bowl marked N; 5 fruits double handled candy compote in amethyst marked N; 7 pc. marigold peacock at the fountain water set marked N; 7 pc. lustre rose marigold berry set; amethyst & 3 fruits Millersburg carnival bowl; cobalt blue 3 fruits footed bowl marked N; other pcs. of carnival; pink depression strawberry pattern water pitcher; several pcs. of pink Rose Sharon; 13 pink petal luncheon plates; other pcs. of depression in Miss America, Dogwood, Madrid, block optic and others; cut glass celery dish; cut glass toothpick; cut glass relish w/3 legs; 3 cut saltcellars; cut glass cruet; Jenkins glass cut; glass relish w/3 legs; 3 water goblets; 6 iridescent sherberts; tall etched water pitcher; 7 iridescent bread & butter plates; Prussia plate marked floyal fluidostat; 2 signed hand painted plates; Nippon covered bowl; Linoges cream & sugar; 3 pcs. of green beveled Star pattern glass; nice Dresden pitcher & bowl set; black amethyst console bowl marked Cambridge; ruby red Cambridge glass ice bucket; Rockingham glass pitcher marked Robert Dixon Preston 1881; 4 pcs. of signed Degenerhart; 8 Haviland plates; unusual toilet type mug; 3 pc. milk glass dresser set; Bavaria cream & sugar, salt & pepper; 1972-5 Hummel Xmas bells; Nurnum Rockwell 1st. Edition Butter Girl plate, The Doctor and the Doll plate & The Stroker; other items.

#### TRAMP ART COLLECTION. OAK ANTIQUE FURNITURE, HOUSEHOLD

Over 20 piece Tramp Art collection including dressers, chest of drawers, boxes, picture frames etc., nice 42" round oak table w/2 leaves; 46" round oak table w/2 leaves; nice Sellers 2 pc. oak kitchen cabinet w/center pull out leg & cutting block; set of 4 nice spindle-back chairs; oak 5 legged harvest table; extra nice left handed oak bookcase secretary desk; set of 4 oak pressed back chairs; nice bentwood youth chair; cherry glass door cupboard top; 7 oak church pew; large ornate oak picture frame; nice pressed back arched rocker; small cherry candle stand; custom made ash open corner cupboard, (not old); Dacey churn; other primitives; nice upholstered recliner; brown hide-a-bed sofa; black leather recliner; small B/W TV; plant stand; Edison upright victrola; nice drum table w/2 leaves; set of 4 rush bottom ladder-back chairs; several nice Gone With The Wind electric lamps; brass electrified Aladdin lamp; 6 pc. stainless wireless cooking set; other household items.

#### DIAMOND RING

Lady's 7 diamond ring with 1.99 carats total with 14K setting appraised at \$1,922.00 replacement value. Appraisal will be furnished. Other costume jewelry.

TERMS: CASH or GOOD check w/approval I.D.  
Not responsible for accidents or theft.

ALLEN JOHNSON

Doug Davies

Auctioneer

R.R.2, Box 145

Brookston, Ind. 47923

(317) 563-3630



NOTE: As Mrs. Johnson is selling her home she is offering many quality items. To make a full day of selling we have added a few items from others. Everything will be sold at absolute auction.

110-16

## Lincoln Memories

goal — the saving of an important Lincoln landmark and the nurture of a way of life experienced by the Lincolns and others who maintained mountain retreats.

The Friends of Hildene were taking a long chance. The estate needed major renovations; even minimum maintenance would be considerable. The Main House, the elegant mansion perched on a promontory jutting out between the Green and Taconic Mountain ranges, cried out for restoration. Anticipation of reduced tourism due to increasing travel costs weighed heavily on the minds of all concerned.

Among the most optimistic members of the Friends of Hildene was Oscar V. Johnson. A long-time neighbor and friend of "Peggy" Beckwith while she was mistress of Hildene, he was acquainted with the house and its contents. Although Miss Beckwith was most comfortable sitting in the Hildene

continued from page 11

kitchen discussing farming methods over coffee, she often surprised Johnson with casual references to the historical treasure-trove that was her home.

Once, she showed him a dusty, framed painting, just down from the attic — it proved to be an original Rosa Bonheur, purchased in Paris while Peggy was a student. Another time, a plain, oval mirror was pointed out; President Lincoln had glanced into it as he left the White House for the fateful evening at Ford's Theater. Those skeptical over the feasibility of Hildene's appeal grew used to Oscar Johnson's patient response: "But we're dealing with the magical name of Lincoln."

In 1978, bolstered by an anonymous gift of \$200,000, a growing roster of members and several grants, the Friends of Hildene officially bought the estate from the Christian Science Church. A dignified second career as an

(continued on back page)

## ANTIQUE AUCTION

Due to entering housing for the elderly, E. J. & Marie Morgan of Hastings, Michigan, have commissioned our company to sell their entire lifetime antique collection of hand picked select antiques. For convenience of sale the sale will be held at the Marshall Civic Center, 214 E. Mansion St.

### MARSHALL, MICH.

(Between BATTLE CREEK & JACKSON)

## SAT., MAY 15 — 10:30 A.M.

#### ANTIQUE FURNITURE

Beautiful French curved glass curio cabinet; walnut secretary w-drop-front, pigeonholes, 3 drawers & double glass doors; fancy marble turtle-top walnut occasional table; beautiful cranberry hanging lamp w/pool hobs; beautiful hanging lamp w/amber hobnail shade & jeweled hand; walnut double door drop-front secretary w/drawers, very elaborate; curly tiger maple occasional table w/drawers; single oak bookcase; 5 cane seated matching walnut w/tiger inlay dining chairs; 3 cane seated tiger maple chairs; green satin Gone With Wind lamp; walnut commode; 6 legged walnut drop leaf dining table; cherry corner cupboard; Seth Thomas short drop schoolmarm's clock; bracket oak wall reflector; tiger maple lift top blanket chest w/2 drawers; tiger maple washstand w/towel bars; tiger maple & walnut inlay commode; French china porcelain clock; 5 tier corner walnut whatnot; brass banquet lamp; tiger maple 4 drawer chest w/tulip pulls; small walnut fancy occasional table w/white marble turtle-top; walnut double door curio cabinet w/glass sides; mirror back walnut hobe seat; early Victorian whatnot; cherry Empire chest marble top shelf; small tilt-back settee; brass plant stand; child's rocker; stool w/whisk cover; tiger maple Lincoln rocker w/cane seat & back; walnut fireside chair; white marble top fancy cut down coffee table; small walnut pier mirror w/shelf; lift-top butternut commode; tiger maple clock shelf; star wall rack w/porcelain appointments.

#### DISHES, ETC., OF OUTSTANDING QUALITY

Coraline pitcher w/applied handle, 7"; mother-of-pearl decorated satin bride's basket, fluted; Martinsville peachbloss fluted bride's basket; fluted blue hobnail bride's basket; Mt. Washington peachbloss pickle canisters; 2 Bohemian satin glass glass aurene tazans 12"; overlay fluted diamond quilted bowl; 5" Royal Bayreuth rose tapestry pitcher; Royal Bayreuth rose tapestry basket; dish; Rubina Verdi 8" pitcher w/animal decor; Royal Bayreuth rose tapestry perfume; pink satin glass caster set; pr. New England peachbloss salt & peppers; New England peachbloss square top celery; Florette pattern satin glass salt & pepper; Florette pattern satin glass butter; Florette pattern satin glass spooner; Florette pattern satin glass spooner, creamer, sugar, syrup, celery; pink satin vase; pink satin glass, paneled pattern; 5 Florette pattern satin glass tumblers; pink satin glass quilted pitcher w/applied handle; pink satin glass cracker jars. Wheeling Drapery fluted vase; New England peachbloss rose bowl, 1893; mother-of-pearl rose bowls; fluted overlay toothpick; aurene toothpick; cut velvet vases; mother-of-pearl vase; rose tapestry flower pot; Royal Bayreuth; Flow Blue historic plates; silver onyx pieces; cranberry lamp shade; pr. green updrill candlesticks; Victorian flint glass pedestal dishes; amberina celery w/scalloped top; set sterling silver service for 6, Prelude pattern; unusual small oil lamp; cobalt blue porcelain picture; sponge washbowl & pitcher; French porcelain pic. frames; blue Scroll & Eye milk glass plate; Dresden type plates; 51 pcs. Mustrieck china; Bull's-eye berry set; ironstone tureen w/corn handle; Medina chocolate put & milk pitcher; Boebie mark tureen, platter & 6 soups; cut glass creamer & sugar; Hawkes signed cut glass bowl; Libbey signed cut glass plate; lg. dbl. Daisy cracker jar w/ruby top; 6 Rose Medallion plates; collection of old mg. animals on nests; blue mg. animals on nests; Staffordshire hen on nest; lg. Victorian compote; 38 pcs. semi-porcelain English dishes; cobalt blue pcs.; amber fine cut covered compote; French china dresser set w/candlesticks; 52 pcs. Chelsea dishes; pink satin glass urn w/applied camphor handle; portrait Lotus bowl; satin overlay w/white bowl aurene vases aurene stick vase; lg. satin glass rose bowl; other rose bowls; blue quilted & fluted mother-of-pearl vase; Naibesa 8" pitcher; spatterware pitcher; mg. tree bark pitcher; 9" Murhina pitcher; pink satin shade; Royal Bayreuth satin finish creamer & sugar; pink satin glass vase; Red Finley sugar; blue satin glass vase; Staffordshire dove on nest; pink satin Florette pattern light; old milk glass pcs.; 1000 Eye blue mg. bowl; frosted ribbon compote; lustre ware pcs.; sev. toothpick holders; cut glass pcs.; many beautiful hand painted pcs.; apple green w/animal cordial set; Calumet Baking Powder cake plate; quantity of other unusual & beautiful dishes; pictures & picture frames; approx. 40 books on antiques. (10-15)

Auctioneer's comments: This quality auction consists of approx. 375 antique lots. This will be one of the finest selections that will be offered this year. Inspection starting at 8:30 a.m. day of sale only. No admission charge. Those wishing catalogue send \$2.00 to Belcher Auction Company, Lincoln served.

TERMS: CASH or GOOD check w/approval I.D.

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DANIEL D. DEAN

222 N. Michigan Ave.

Coldwater, MI 49036

Ph. 517-279-9748



## Editor's Notes . . .

from the 1941 movie would be part of a popular culture auction in June.

Sotheby's explained recently, "in one of the most famous scenes in film history, the sled is consumed by flames and the mysterious dying words of millionaire publisher Charles Foster Kane are explained."

There were actually three custom-made balsam wood sleds but apparently only one survived for more than 40 years. Reportedly a studio watchman rescued this discarded sled from a trash pile at the RKO studio.

The auction house says the movie item may bring \$15,000 to \$20,000.

(continued from page 2)

That's debatable, but Paul Newman's bicycle from "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" brought \$2,100 not long ago and Shirley Temple's teddy bear from "Captain January" fetched \$450.

### TST TOURIST

While the eyes of the world are on Great Britain amid the crisis over the Falkland Islands, the eyes of one British writer are on the U.S.

Jeffery Thrift, who has contributed reports on auctions and other topics from England to the TST for years, is making his first visit to the United States this month.

## FOLK STUFF

### STRAWBERRY SYRUP

Cook several quarts of strawberries until the juice is extracted, or use the surplus juice from canning strawberries. For every pint of the strained strawberry juice use ¼ pounds of sugar. Boil rapidly for 5 minutes and pour into hot, sterilized jars and seal.

Can be used as is for pan-cakes, etc. or combined with lemon or orange juice for a refreshing beverage.

### STRAWBERRY SHRUB

1 quart berries, 2 lemons and 1 cup sugar. Select ripe, sound berries; stem. After washing and measuring, crush berries, add sugar and lemon juice. Let set overnight. Next morning pour into jelly bag and let drip for one hour or more, stirring occasionally. Bring juice to boiling point and pour into hot sterilized jars to ½ inch from top. Put cap screwing band on firmly tight. Process 30 minutes in hot water bath at 180° F.

### MINT JULEP

2 cups sugar, 1 quart water, 12 sprigs fresh mint, 1½ cups boiling water, 1 cup orange juice, juice of 8 lemons, 1 cup strawberry juice and 1 pint grape juice. Boil sugar with one quart of water 20 minutes. Chop mint and pour over it the 1½ cups of boiling water. Let it steep for five minutes or more. Strain and add syrup. Bring to boil. Pour into hot, sterilized jars. Put cap screwing band on firmly tight. Process 30 minutes at simmering temperature of 180° F.

### BOTTLES,

#### TO PREVENT BREAKAGE IN PACKING

Danger of breaking bottles may be avoided by slipping rubber rings over them.

#### GLASS STOPPER,

#### TO REMOVE

Apply hot water to the neck of the bottle, which will expand, while the stopper retains its former temperature and becomes loose.

## Quilt Show Set At Lebanon, Ind.

The Hoosier Heritage Quilt Guild is sponsoring a quilt festival in conjunction with the Lebanon Sesqui-centennial on June 25-27. Quilts will be on display in Memory Hall, Lebanon, Ind.; from 4 to 9 p.m. on Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday, and from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday. All quilters are invited to enter. For additional information, send a SASE to Irene Nesbitt, 2530 North State Road 39, Lebanon, IN 46052.

## Lincoln Memories . . .

educational, cultural and recreational resource was confirmed.

Hildene was not only the home of a famous American family, it was also the repository of much priceless Americana. When the mansion was completed in 1905, the Lincolns adhered to their \$63,000 budget and furnished the home with a variety of available pieces. Some came from their Chicago home, other items were brought from Mrs. Lincoln's family home in Iowa. Fine Victorian furniture mingles comfortably with sensible turn-of-the-century pieces that served the Lincolns for 76 years.

Tracing the origins and prices paid for Hildene's contents is a relatively simple process, for Robert Lincoln was a meticulous record-keeper. Letterpress copies of all his correspondence and thousands of his cancelled checks remained untouched in his files for years. One exchange reveals that the Lincolns were sharing their country-made butter with the Marshall Fields in Chicago. Mr. Field obviously took his dairy products seriously; after numerous admonishments as to the saltiness, sweetness, firmness and freshness of the Hildene butter, the Lincolns finally ceased their shipments.

One of the Lincolns' most extravagant purchases came in 1908, when they installed an Aeolian pipe organ in the spacious reception hall at Hildene. The organ, which cost \$11,500, was electric and could be played manually or by the use of rolls. Its tones resounded mightily through a thousand pipes and filled the Hildene house with music. Still intact is the Lincoln collection of nearly 250 rolls, representing diverse musical tastes, from Viennese waltzes to the "Grizzly Bear Rag."

Among the first restoration projects undertaken by the Friends of Hildene was the rejuvenation of the organ, believed to be the oldest residential player organ in the country today. After 40 years of silence, its music is now one of the most popular features on the Hildene tours and regularly scheduled recitals are offered.

The news of Hildene's new era as an historic resource was greeted enthusiastically by Lincoln scholars who had long speculated on what treasures connected with the Civil War president might linger in his son's home. Although Robert Lincoln placed the majority of his father's Presidential papers at the Library of Congress, many Lincoln relics were discovered at Hildene.

Over a thousand family photographs were gathered up from desks and drawers and albums in the house. The Lincoln library, a superb collection of rare and first-edition books, was discovered intact. Among the volumes were books used by the Lincolns in the White House, copies inscribed by Mary Todd Lincoln as early as 1859 and others purchased on her European sojourns after the President's assassination.

Dishware belonging to the Lincolns in the White House as well as one of the famous Lincoln stovepipe hats are prominently exhibited. On an easel is a delicate portrait of Mary Todd Lincoln, painted by her great-granddaughter who was an artist and musician as well as a hardy outdoorswoman.

The one-time Carriage Barn at Hildene now serves as a display center, with a 50-seat theater in the old horse-stall area for presentations of "The Lincoln Family in Vermont," an orientation program given prior to house tours.

While the Hildene mansion is the jewel that crowns the estate, surrounding open lands offer a myriad of recreational possibilities and unsurpassed panoramic views of the mountain ranges. Hiking trails now criss-cross Hildene and in 1980 the first ski touring center in Manchester opened on Lincoln land. Equestrian facilities have been initiated on the property and a white-fenced ring now circles one of Hildene's scenic meadows. Future plans (there are over 30 projects in the hopper for the Friends of Hildene to consider) include bridle paths to traverse the Hildene acres.

The lush gardens at Hildene, originally planned to duplicate a Gothic stained-glass window, have been given the promise of new bloom with a

(continued from page 35)



ONLY son of President Lincoln to live to adulthood, Robert Todd Lincoln is shown in his rural Vermont setting.



ABRAHAM Lincoln II (1873-1890) is shown with his sisters Jessie (1875-1948) and Mary (1869-1938) in this photo of the 1880s. Jessie's son is the only remaining direct descendant of the president.

\$22,000 grant from Lila Acheson Wallace, co-founder of *The Reader's Digest*. Undoubtedly those gardens will become the scene of many weddings as Hildene continues the policy of opening the mansion for parties, receptions and other social events.

Public response to the opening of the Lincoln home has been enthusiastic since the first regular tours started in 1979. Attendance has doubled from year to year, with nearly 40,000 visitors in 1981. Nearly one-third of the tourists came with bus trips. According to project manager Claire Schoffall, "We prepared for the possibility of these energy-conscious times affecting Hildene's growth by contacting the bus groups." In fact, the by-words of the recent tourist season advertising have been "Don't Miss the Bus to Robert Todd Lincoln's Hildene!"

As a cultural mecca, a repository of history and a recreational area, Hildene is firmly established as a unique resource. In less than five years, the estate has taken its place among the great historic homes of America. Far from becoming a stagnant, stuffy museum, Hildene is like the Lincoln legend itself; cherished, living and growing.

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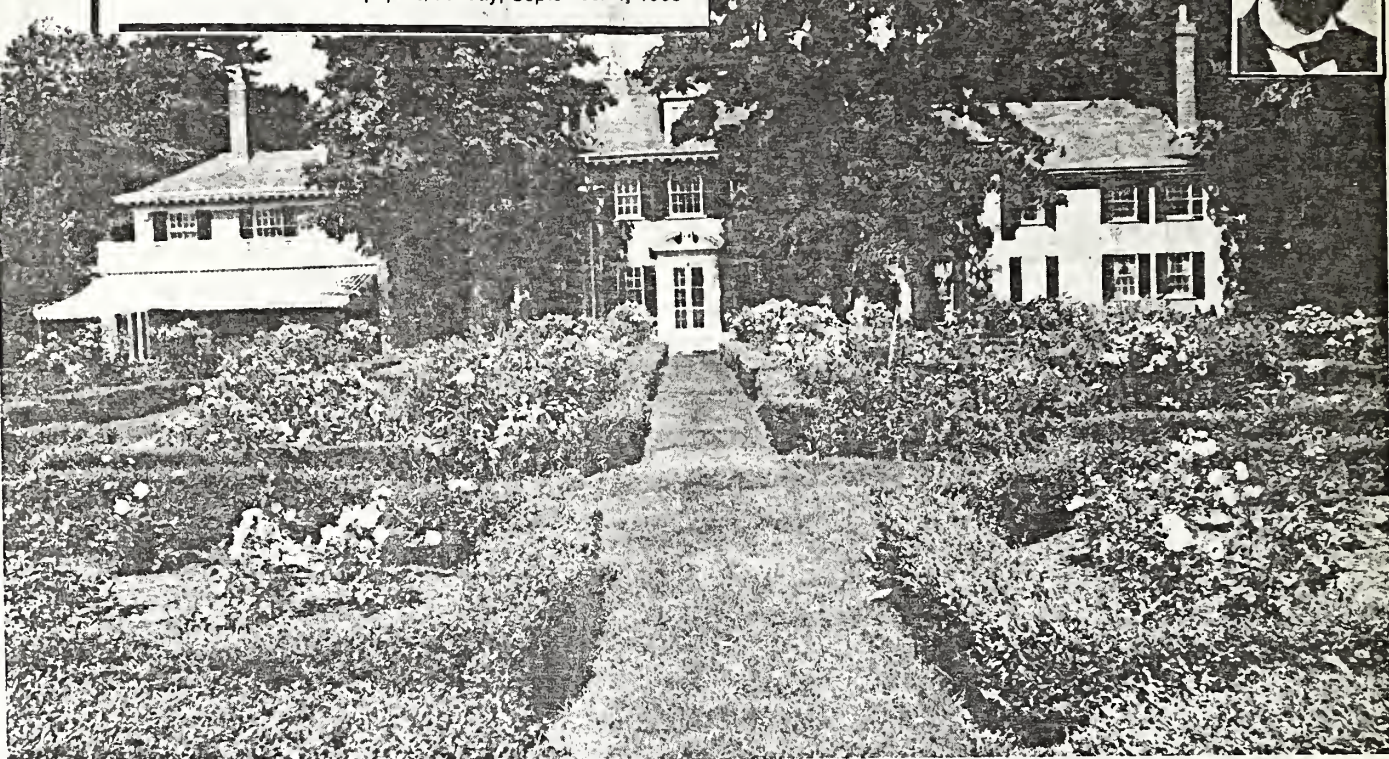
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# Travel

Gannett Westchester Newspapers/Sunday, September 4, 1983



Illinois is known as the home of Abraham Lincoln, inset, but Hildene in Vermont became the home of his son, Robert Todd Lincoln

## The other 'Land of Lincoln'

By Harold Holzer

Although Illinois license plates proclaim their state to be the "Land of Lincoln," the unlikely hamlet of Manchester, Vt., may dispute the claim.

It was Robert Todd Lincoln — the president's oldest son and the only one to live to maturity and sire children of his own — who replanted the family roots in New England.

An intensely private man who more often fled from than basked in his father's glory, Robert capped a 40-year love affair with the Vermont mountains by building a 24-room summer mansion in 1902. A visit to "Hildene," his sandstone-fronted Georgian Revival manor house, fuels the suspicion that Robert may have constructed it to make a final, decisive break with his past.

Actually, he was a cabinet officer, a diplomat and a millionaire businessman — a success on almost any scale except that which measured him against his father. By seeking refuge in a state he could call his own, Robert found the way to escape — geographically, at least — from the endless comparative scrutiny from which he could never emerge favorably. Before long he even referred to "Hildene" as "my ancestral home," avoiding his native Midwest whenever possible.

Ironically, Robert's introduction to the region was involuntary. During the grim summer of 1863, his father virtually assigned the 21-year-old Harvard student the task of escorting his mother and younger brother here.

Somehow, despite all the elements conspiring against him, Robert fell in love with Manchester. There was the brilliantly white-washed Equinox House, where the family put up, and the mountain scenery with its hills that leap from all directions. And then there was the bracing, temperate weather, thrilling in itself to a young man bred on the hot prairie and accustomed to the oppressive humidity of Washington.

He returned next summer and then made a reservation for the following July that included the president. But it was not to be, because Lincoln was assassinated three months before the planned return.

Nonetheless, Robert went back often. At Hildene, he would pass his last 20 summers, each progressively longer than the one before, as he stretched vacations into November, playing golf with red golf balls when confronted by early snowfalls. Eventually he retired there, and he died in the ground floor bedroom that still has the handcarved bed in which he slept, his dressing mirror, straight-backed reading chairs, and his silver comb and brush set.

For decades, no one thought of turning Hildene into a public shrine. It simply became the ancestral home Robert had intended. His widow lived there along with his daughters, and eventually a granddaughter took up residence. Mary Todd Lincoln "Peggy" Beckwith, the last of the Hildene Lincolns, died there only eight years ago. She willed the property to the Christian Science Church, which seemed close to selling it to developers until a Friends of Hildene organization raised enough money to buy back the estate.

After a restoration, the property was opened to the public. Visitors who enter the grounds today pass under a sign advertising the surname Lincoln far more prominently than the given name Robert, an apparent attempt to snare unsuspecting motorists by dangling the lure of the Great Emancipator. The subterfuge is unnecessary: Hildene is a treasure on its own terms.

A carriage barn — one of 26 smaller buildings on the estate in various states of restoration — has been converted into a modest visitors' center, offering a well-made introductory slide show, a small museum display and access to a horse-drawn carriage ride up the hill to the main house.

Visitors enter through the original porte-cochere and into a spacious front hall, dominated by Robert's own Victo-

rian couches and a Tiffany grandfather clock.

All the tours are guided by well-informed hosts, and cover a 45-minute span on both the main and upper floors. Nearly all the rooms are open to the public and much of Robert's original furniture remains on view.

Robert's daughter later added some of her own furnishings, although her ambitious plan to completely redecorate was aborted by her premature death. What remains of her efforts, like the guest bedroom, bear the look of a Depression-era hotel, with solid, square chests of drawers and too much velvet everywhere. Similarly unremarkable are the rooms granddaughter Peggy occupied into the 1970s, including a boudoir bearing the unmistakable imprint of a succession of un-housebroken dogs who apparently ran free for years.

Fortunately, Robert's family had decided out of respect to close off the entire west wing of the ground floor after his death. Left unchanged were the mahogany-and-red library and a stove-heated corner office from which Robert ran the Pullman company during his Hildene summers.

An office, once a screened-in porch, still houses the typewriter Robert once

Please see **HILDENE** on page G3



## **HILDENE/** From page G1

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used. One wonders, however, how he could have concentrated on any kind of work with the breathtaking view of Mount Equinox confronting him from the main window. Untouched, too, are the wall files Robert built here, whose drawers are still packed with the musty records he left behind. Much was made over the discovery some years back of a hidden wall safe containing copies of nearly every letter Robert ever wrote. The archive is now being studied in Illinois for insight into both his life and his father's. Unfortunately, the treasures have yielded little so far.

Hildene is also a house of surprises, from the hilltop observatory where Robert studied the stars to the beautifully restored English-style gardens outside the south door. Out front is the spectacular, vaulting front lawn, which Robert used as a private driving range and which is crowned by a recently restored gazebo.

The center hallway is dominated by a huge electro-pneumatic pipe organ, the largest self-playing residential instrument in the country, the guides contend. Its music now thunders from the 1,000 pipes hidden behind wood-slat grilles on the main stairway.

Hildene can be seen daily, from May 1 through November 1, and again during Christmas week for special candlelight tours. Admission is \$2.75 for adults; \$1 for children under 15. Even when the main house closes the grounds remain open and the three nature trails are converted into cross-country ski paths. With the return of spring, the property is used for special events such as antiques fairs and horse shows. The adventurous could even get married here: Hildene may be rented for weddings and other private parties.

Hildene is about five hours by car from Westchester. U.S. Route 7, a main north-south road in Vermont, passes through Bennington and, 25 miles north, runs into Manchester.

# ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S *Hildene*



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December 12, 1984

Dear Member:

1984 has been another excellent year in the development of Robert Lincoln's estate as a memorial to the Lincoln family and as a community asset. Toward the end of January, 1985, you will be receiving your next Newsletter and with it, an annual report.

As the year ends, I would like to call your attention to three items:

First, a flyer reminding you of our annual Candlelight Tours is enclosed. The popularity of these tours has increased dramatically since they were originated in 1981. As a result, we have extended the hours, hired three sleighs, and recruited 100 volunteers to conduct them. Remember, as a member of FOH these tours are complimentary. We suggest you come before 7 P.M. or after 8:30 P.M.

Second, we have received many calls asking about purchasing one of our Hildene items as a Christmas gift. We will be glad to mail to you, or to someone else, a copy of the Hildene cook-book, HILDENE, THEN AND NOW, or a copy of the popular long-playing record album of MUSIC FROM ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S HILDENE. Copies of the cook-book, postage paid, are \$7.50. Copies of the record, postage paid, are \$6.50. We will mail them the day we receive your check, or you can give us your order by phone and we will bill you later.

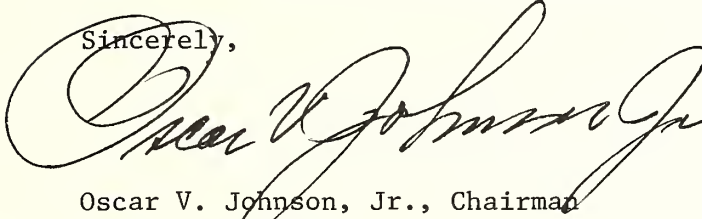
Third, although we have balanced our operating budget this year as we have for the past three years, the money we have spent on capital improvements - many of them emergency items that arose during 1984 - has put us in a serious position as far as our cash flow is concerned entering 1985. Some of you have already



made year-end gifts. Others of you gave something extra during the year for the Observatory or for the septic tank fund. For those special gifts we are very grateful. If you have not made a financial contribution to Hildene over and beyond your 1984 membership, we hope you will consider doing so now. We can certainly use it to good advantage.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Oscar V. Johnson, Jr.", written in dark ink.

Oscar V. Johnson, Jr., Chairman  
Board of Trustees

OVJ/ga

P.S. Your contribution, your purchase, or a gift membership (individual \$15, family \$30) can be charged to your VISA account. Our office is open Monday through Friday, 9 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Just call us at 362-1788.

# NEWS from

ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S *Hildene*



*Friends of Hildene, Inc. - Box 377 - Manchester, Vermont 05254 - Tel: (802) 362-1788*

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FOR RELEASE:  
CONTACT:

IMMEDIATE - JUNE 27, 1986  
DAVID SHELDON 362-2131

DR. NEELY TO UNVEIL ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S  
ROLE IN HIS MOTHER'S INSANITY TRIAL

In his keynote address at the Abraham Lincoln Family Symposium, Dr. Mark E. Neely, Jr., director of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library & Museum in Ft. Wayne, IN, will reveal in meticulous detail the record Robert Todd Lincoln kept on the circumstances surrounding the insanity trial of his mother in 1875.

The Symposium, the first ever held on the Lincoln family, will take place at Hildene, Robert Todd Lincoln's home in Manchester, VT, on July 24, 25 and 26.

Dr. Neely's remarks will be based on his book, "Mary Todd Lincoln: The Insanity Trial," which is scheduled to be published in October 1986.

The background information was uncovered by James T. Hickey, former curator of the Lincoln Collection of the Illinois State Historical Society in Springfield, IL, while he was reviewing Robert Todd Lincoln's papers for the Friends of Hildene, the non-profit organization that is restoring the historic home.



The three-day Symposium program will feature presentations by a number of nationally-known Lincoln scholars and enthusiasts. John Goff, the author, for instance, will discuss "Robert Todd Lincoln and His Father"; Betty Mitchell, another author, will cover "Robert Todd Lincoln After 1865." Dr. John Lattimer of the Columbia University School of Medicine will show that "Abraham Lincoln and His Descendants Clearly Did Not Have Marfan's Syndrome." Thomas Schwartz, new curator of the Lincoln Collection, Illinois Historical Society, will explore "The Tribe of Abraham: Writings on the Lincoln Family"; and Ralph Newman, owner of the Lincoln Bookstore in Chicago, will describe "Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith: The Re-Entry Of The Lincoln Family Into The Mainstream Of The Lincoln Story."

A Civil War Encampment, surrey rides through the Hildene estate, equestrian events and the Governor's Banquet will be interspersed through this unique program which will provide new insights on what happened to Abraham Lincoln's descendants in the century following his death.

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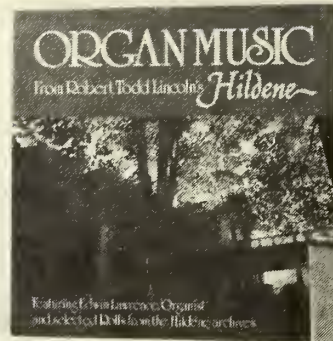
ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S *Hildene*

MUSEUM GIFT SHOP  
CATALOGUE  
FALL 1986



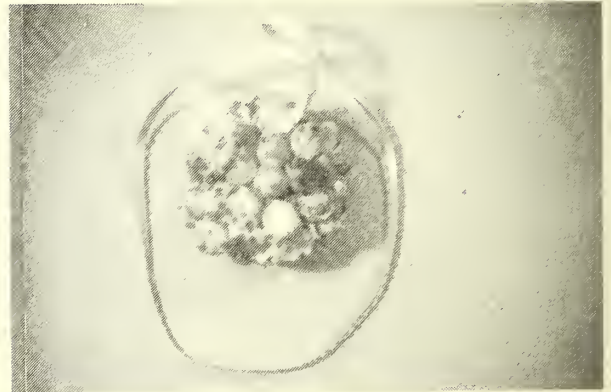
Where else but Vermont would you find real maple leaves to wear? Vermont Naturecraft Originals gathers these multi-colored leaves and makes them into beautiful pins, pendants and earrings. No two are ever alike! They are real conversation pieces. We have pretty tiles available, too. Be sure to specify pierced or screw back earrings.

GS 1	Pin (not shown)	\$3.00
GS 2	Pendant	\$4.00
GS 3	Earrings Pr. (Pierced/Screw Back)	\$3.50
GS 4	Tile	\$4.00



A well-known Vermont organist plays several selections on one side of this recording of Hildene's great Aeolian organ. The other side features the famous organ "rolls" that R.T.Lincoln enjoyed so much. Also available in cassette.

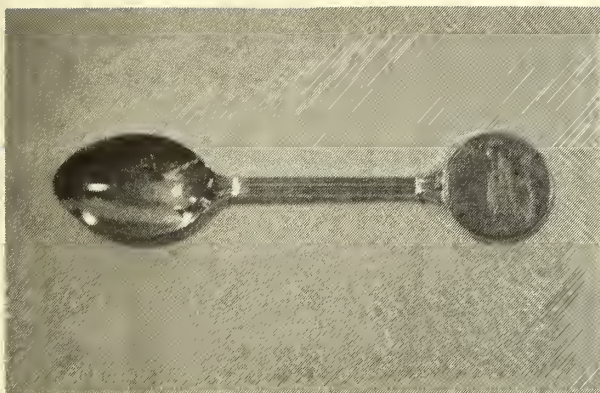
GS 5	Organ Record	\$5.00
GS 6	Cassette	\$5.00



Keep your closet fresh with this tiny pink rosebud pomander/sachet. It will last for for years because it comes with a vial of oil for periodically refreshing the sachet. Attractively boxed, it makes a perfect hostess gift.

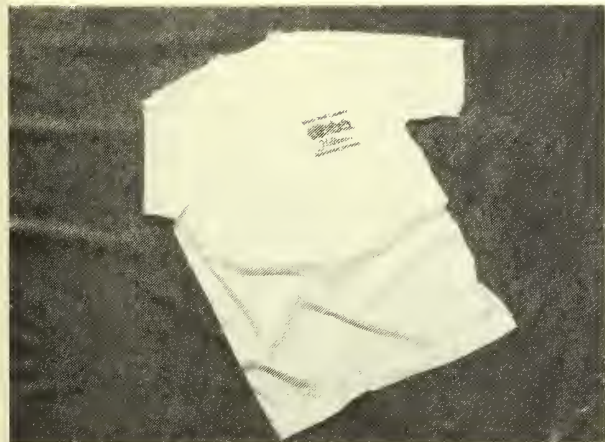
GS 7	Rosebud Pomander/Sachet	\$7.50
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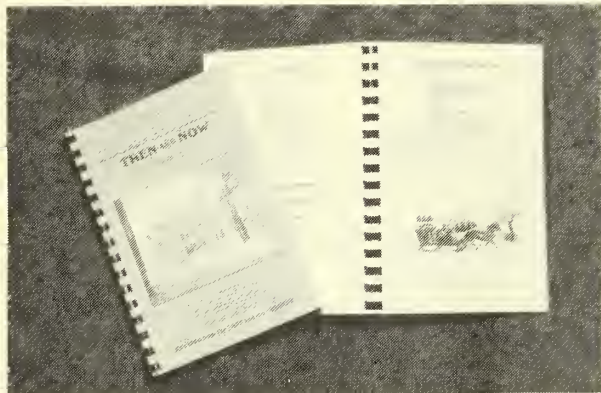
A dainty commemorative spoon carefully crafted in England especially for Hildene in silver plate. The Main House is engraved on the medallion and would make a charming addition to your collection or a lovely gift.

GS 8 Spoon \$8.50



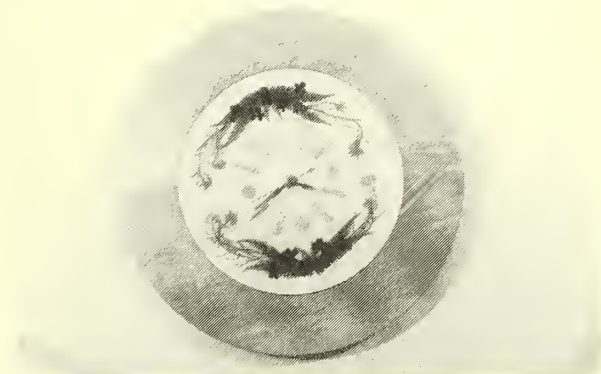
It's Here! A Hildene T-shirt. Made of 100% pure cotton, it's pre-shrunk and also machine washable. The kids will love it and so will you. The shirt is white and the insignia dark green. Please specify sizes.

GS 9 Youth T-Shirt \$7.50  
 Sm. Med. Lg.  
 (8/10) (12/14) (16/18)  
 GS 10 Adult T-Shirt \$8.50  
 S/M/L/XL



"Hildene Hospitality - Then and Now" is our cook book brimming with mouthwatering recipes from the Robert T. Lincoln era. Many of these goodies have been taken from Hildene kitchen records while others are from local residents who remember the elegance of luncheons and dinners at Hildene.

GS 11 Cookbook \$5.00



One of the most beautiful examples of Vermont crafts is the art of encasing real flowers, leaves and ferns in resin. This stunning clock is just that and is then surrounded with a handsome hardwood case beautifully finished. It runs on a D battery (not included). Your choice of light or dark wood.

GS 12 Clock \$62.00



When you think of Vermont, maple syrup and sugar immediately come to mind. We think we have something unique that will add zip to your breakfast toast - a jar of granulated maple sugar! Marvelous for desserts and hot breads, too. Try it!

GS 13	8oz Jar Granulated	
	Maple Sugar	\$5.25



A constant reminder of the Green Mountain State is in this charming paperweight. As you look at it on your desk you will see a sampling of lovely wildflowers from all over the state. An eyeful of pleasure from us to you.

GS 14	Paperweight	\$16.00
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This Armatale sandcast plate by Wilton is a real gem. Armatale has that pewter look and will make a lasting memento for your home or something very special for a friend.

GS 15 Hildene Plate \$32.00

When Ordering, Please:

- give item #, description and price.
- print name, address and zip code clearly.
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Please allow 3-4 weeks delivery  
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Mail order to:  
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ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HIS FAMILY

❖ A SYMPOSIUM ❖

JULY 24-26, 1986  
MANCHESTER, VERMONT

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND

## **THURSDAY, JULY 24**

- 12:00 Noon*      REGISTRATION AT THE EQUINOX
- 5:00 P.M.*      RECEPTION HOSTED BY HILDENE TRUSTEES  
On the Garden Terrace at Hildene
- 7:00 P.M.*      BUFFET DINNER  
In the Manchester Room at The Equinox
- 8:00 P.M.*      OPENING PROGRAM  
Moderator: David C. Sheldon  
Welcome: Oscar V. Johnson, Jr.  
Introduction of Keynote Speaker: Frank J. Williams  
Keynote Address: Dr. Mark E. Neely, Jr.  
    "The Insanity File: The Case of Mary Todd Lincoln"

## **FRIDAY, JULY 25**

Breakfast on an individual basis.

- 9:00 A.M.*      MORNING SESSION  
Moderator: David C. Sheldon  
    "An Overview of the Lincoln Family: Names,  
    Dates, Places
- 9:30 A.M.*      TOUR OF ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S HILDENE  
Tours begin with theatre presentation in Carriage Barn.
- 12:00 Noon*      LUNCHEON AT EKWANOK COUNTRY CLUB
- 2:00 P.M.*      AFTERNOON SESSION  
Moderator: David C. Sheldon  
    "The Image of The Lincoln Family," Harold Holzer  
    "Robert Todd Lincoln and His Father," John S. Goff  
    15-Minute Intermission, Hospitality Room Open  
    "Robert Todd Lincoln After 1865," Betty Mitchell  
    "Recollections of Mary Lincoln Beckwith,"  
    Oscar V. Johnson, Jr.
- 5:00 P.M.*      FRIDAY EVENING  
No program scheduled. List of restaurants, theatre presentations, motion pictures, etc., in program folder.



# IS FAMILY: A SYMPOSIUM ❁

## SATURDAY, JULY 26

Breakfast on an individual basis.

9:00 A.M.

### MORNING SESSION

Moderator: Frank J. Williams

"Abraham Lincoln and His Descendants Clearly  
Did Not Have Marfan's Syndrome,"

Dr. John K. Lattimer

"The Tribe of Abraham: Writings on the Lincoln  
Family," Thomas F. Schwartz

15-Minute Intermission, Hospitality Room Open

"Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith: The Re-entry of the  
Lincoln Family into the Mainstream of the Lincoln  
Story," James T. Hickey, Ralph G. Newman

12:30 Noon

### BUFFET LUNCHEON

Served on the Garden Terrace at Hildene

### ENTERTAINMENT AT HILDENE

Civil War Encampment

Surrey Rides/Wagon Rides through the Hildene Estate

Musical Variations

5:30 P.M.

### HISTORIC MANCHESTER VILLAGE RECEPTION

Hosted by Hildene Trustee Judith Livingston at her  
home across Historic Route 7A from The Equinox

7:30 P.M.

### GOVERNOR'S BANQUET AT THE EQUINOX

Special Announcements

"The Lincoln Family—Where Do They Stand:  
A Comparison to Other First Families,"  
Frank J. Williams

*All regular programs and sessions will meet  
in the Manchester Room at The Equinox.*

*The Hospitality Room is open 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.  
during the entire Symposium.*

*A Hildene volunteer is present to assist you.  
The Hospitality Room is located on the lower level  
at The Equinox adjacent to the Manchester Room.*

#### *Program Participants*

**JOHN S. GOFF** is Chairman of the Social Science Department at Phoenix College in Phoenix, Arizona, and is author of the book *Robert Todd Lincoln: A Man in His Own Right*. He also has a private law practice in Phoenix.

**JAMES T. HICKEY** recently retired after serving for 27 years as Curator of the Lincoln Collection of the Illinois State Historical Library and remains active as one of the nation's foremost authorities on Abraham Lincoln.

**HAROLD HOLZER** is one of the country's leading authorities on Abraham Lincoln iconography. He has authored numerous articles and several books on Lincoln in print. Holzer is currently working under New York Governor Mario M. Cuomo as Special Counselor to the Director of Economic Development.

**OSCAR V. JOHNSON, JR.**, has been Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Friends of Hildene since 1980. He has been the most significant force behind the restoration of the estate and was honored for this effort in 1985 with an honorary degree from Lincoln College.

**JOHN K. LATTIMER, M.D., Sc.D.**, serves on the faculty of the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and is a renowned author and lecturer on the medical aspects of Abraham Lincoln.

**BETTY MITCHELL** is Associate Professor of History at Southeastern Massachusetts University. She earned her Ph.D. under Stephen B. Oates at the University of Massachusetts and is currently under contract to write a new biography of Robert Todd Lincoln.

**RALPH G. NEWMAN** is an internationally known authority on the life of Abraham Lincoln. Newman founded the famed Abraham Lincoln Bookstore in Chicago in 1933 and operated it for more than 50 years. He also founded the Civil War Roundtable. He is the author of *Lincoln Through the Ages* and other Lincoln books and articles.

**MARK E. NEELY, JR.**, has been Director of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana, since 1973. Dr. Neely is no doubt the most sought-after lecturer on the life of Abraham Lincoln in the country today. He has written extensively about the 16th President and other aspects of American history.

**THOMAS F. SCHWARTZ** has been Curator of the Lincoln Collection for the Illinois State Historical Library since 1985 and has spoken and written widely on the life of Abraham Lincoln. He is a native of Illinois and is working on his dissertation on Jacksonian diplomacy.

**DAVID C. SHELDON** served as Executive Director of Friends of Hildene since the beginning of the restoration of the estate in 1978. He has recently taken on the task of Vice-President for Development for Hildene as the restoration of the Robert Lincoln estate begins to expand its vision.

**FRANK J. WILLIAMS** is the current national President of the Abraham Lincoln Association, Springfield, Illinois. He also serves as President of the Lincoln Group of Boston. He has been active in all areas of the Lincoln movement. Williams is an attorney in Providence, Rhode Island, where he also serves as a Judge of the Probate Court.

This Symposium has been made possible, in part, through a grant from the Ellis L. Phillips Foundation. Printed materials are courtesy of Type Shop Inc. and Action Graphics, Manchester Center, Vermont.



# ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S *Hildene*



June 10, 1986

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TO: PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS  
LINCOLN FAMILY SYMPOSIUM

FROM: DAVE SHELDON, CONFERENCE COORDINATOR

RE: PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Enclosed is a copy of the Symposium program as it stands today. We have had to place time limitations on each presentation because of the number of excellent ones scheduled. Please allow some time for questions within your allotted time period.

It looks like 125 attendees - just the right size for the meeting and dining areas we have available.

I would appreciate a biography from each of you for use in our program. We will condense them. An envelope is enclosed.

Thank you for agreeing to be part of our program. If you have any questions, please write or call me at 802-362-2131 Monday through Friday between 9:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.

We would like a copy of your remarks before you leave the Symposium for possible printing at a later date.

See you in July!

LINCOLN FAMILY SYMPOSIUM

JULY 24, 25, 26, 1986

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

AS OF JUNE 10, 1986

THURSDAY, JULY 24

12 Noon - 5:00 P.M. Registration at The Equinox

5:00 P.M. Reception hosted by Hildene Trustees on  
Garden Terrace at Hildene

7:00 P.M. Buffet Dinner at The Equinox

PROGRAM: Moderator, Dave Sheldon

- \* Welcome by Hildene Chairman Oscar Johnson
- \* Introduction of Keynote Speaker by Frank Williams
- \* Keynote Address by Mark Neely

FRIDAY, JULY 25

- \* Breakfast on an individual basis

9:00 A.M. Participants divided into three groups for Tours  
of Hildene, 1811 House, and walk along Taconic Avenue

12:00 Noon Lunch at Ekwanok Country Club

1:30 P.M. AFTERNOON SESSION  
Dave Sheldon, Moderator

- 1:30 - 2:00 \* AN OVERVIEW OF THE LINCOLN FAMILY: NAMES, DATES,  
PLACES  
Dave Sheldon
- 2:00 - 2:45 \* THE IMAGE OF THE LINCOLN FAMILY  
Harold Holzer
- 2:45 - 3:30 \* ROBERT TODD LINCOLN AND HIS FATHER  
John Goff
- 3:30 - 3:45 \* COFFEE BREAK
- 3:45 - 4:30 \* ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HIS DESCENDANTS CLEARLY  
DID NOT HAVE MARFAN'S SYNDROME  
Dr. John Lattimer
- 4:30 - 5:00 \* ROBERT TODD LINCOLN BECKWITH  
James T. Hickey

FRIDAY EVENING

Everyone on their own for dinner

List of restaurants, plays, motion pictures, etc.  
will be made available



SATURDAY, JULY 26

\* Breakfast on own

9:00 A.M.

MORNING SESSION

Frank Williams, Moderator

9:00 - 9:45 \* ROBERT TODD LINCOLN AFTER 1865  
Betty Mitchell

9:45 -10:30 \* WRITINGS ON THE LINCOLN FAMILY  
Tom Schwartz

10:30 \* COFFEE BREAK

10:45 -11:30 \* THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE LINCOLN FAMILY  
Ralph Newman

11:30 -12:00 \* SPECIAL PRESENTATION

12:30 P.M.

Lunch on the Terrace at Hildene

1:30 - 4:00

ENTERTAINMENT AT HILDENE

\* Surrey Rides through Hildene Estate

\* Civil War Encampment

\* Equestrian Events

5:30 - 7:00

RECEPTION AT HILDENE TRUSTEE JUDY LIVINGSTON'S  
HOME ACROSS FROM EQUINOX

7:30

GOVERNOR'S BANQUET AT EQUINOX

\* Special Announcements

\* Closing Remarks  
Frank J. Williams

LINCOLN FAMILY SYMPOSIUM - MANCHESTER, VERMONT JULY, 1986

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Patricia Cillo  
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Lexington, MA 02173

Mrs. Silvestro  
33 Marrett Road - PO Box 519  
Lexington, MA 02173



### THE HOSPITALITY ROOM

Our Lincoln Family Symposium HOSPITALITY ROOM will be open during the entire Symposium from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. It is located on the lower level of the Equinox Hotel, adjacent to the Manchester Room, in which many of the sessions take place.

The HOSPITALITY ROOM offers the following:

1. EXHIBITS of several Lincoln Family items, some being shown for the first time.
2. An Abraham Lincoln check which is being auctioned by sealed bid. Minimum bid is \$3,500. Bids, signed and in a sealed envelope, may be given to David Sheldon, Symposium Coordinator, any time up to 7:00 PM on Saturday evening. The winning bid will be announced at the Banquet on Saturday night.
3. A host or hostess, to answer questions, give directions, or solve minor problems, will be on duty whenever the room is open.
4. Additional copies of maps, travel guides, and other literature, in case you misplace your Symposium material.
5. A gathering place for all Symposium participants to meet, talk, and renew friendships.

## SELECTED FACTS CONCERNING ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S "HILDENE"

### MANCHESTER, VERMONT

#### I. What is Hildene?

HILDENE is the name of the estate developed by Abraham Lincoln's son, Robert Todd Lincoln, in Manchester, Vermont, in 1905. It consists of 412 acres and 25 buildings. "Dene" is an Old English word for "valley" - hence Hildene means "hill and valley" - half of the acreage is on the hill and half is down along River Road in the valley.

#### II. Who owns Hildene?

Until 1975 direct descendants of Abraham Lincoln owned and occupied the estate. When Abraham Lincoln's great granddaughter, Mary Lincoln Beckwith, died in 1975 she left the estate to the Christian Science Church. It is from the Church that Friends of Hildene, a non-profit organization formed in 1976, purchased the estate for \$200,000 in 1978. Friends of Hildene now has about 3000 members in 31 states.

#### III. What does "Friends of Hildene" have as its purpose?

The purpose of Friends of Hildene is "to preserve the open land and restore the buildings so that the estate can be operated as an educational and cultural resource for the community and as a memorial to Robert Todd Lincoln and his family."

#### IV. How is Friends of Hildene organized?

Friends of Hildene is governed by a 15-person Board of Trustees, five members of which are elected at the Annual Meeting held in January each year. There is also an Advisory Board made up of distinguished citizens of the area. The Board voted recently to create a National Advisory Council to involve the many persons across the nation that want to lend their names to the development of this Lincoln family estate.

#### V. Is the open land being preserved?

Each year since 1978 the Board of Trustees has reaffirmed their goal to preserve the open land. Under a Forest Management Plan worked out with the State of Vermont, 200 acres have been permanently set aside as "forever wild." Selective logging is done on these acres which are all wooded. The rest of the land is being kept in as natural a state as possible, with items like the parking lot being hidden from general view by a forested area.

#### VI. What is being done to restore the buildings?

To date over \$410,000 has been spent on preserving and restoring the buildings. The bulk of this has been spent in the 24-room Main House and in the Carriage Barn. Three other buildings that have been completely restored are the Gazebo, the 1908 Observatory, and the 1832 Schoolhouse on River Road. Emergency stabilization and preventive maintenance are being undertaken in the other 20 buildings.



VII. How does Hildene serve as an "educational and cultural resource?"

Recognizing that Hildene had made basic decisions concerning the open land and was well on its way to restoring the buildings, a plan adopted in 1981 called for the emphasis through 1985 to be placed on meeting community needs with the resources available. The response of the community has been excellent and now over 50 special events and programs are held on the estate, ranging from polo matches to weddings, from picnics to organ recitals.

VIII. Is Hildene open to the public only in the summer?

Hildene is open all year - in the summer for tours of the historic home and community activities; in the winter for cross-country skiing.

IX. Who can cross-country ski, and where?

Anyone can use our 26km. of groomed trails. There is a trail fee, but members of Friends of Hildene ski free. The Carriage Barn, which serves as a Visitors' Center for the summer tour operation, is converted to a Warming Hut for cross-country skiing. There is rental equipment available, hot drinks, a roaring fire in an old wood stove, ski lessons - a complete Ski Touring Center. We are open seven days a week, 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

X. During the summer what facilities are available in addition to the tours of the Main House?

Hildene is rapidly developing into the kind of place one can spend a full day. There are several well-marked nature trails - some of them take a full hour to hike. There is an outdoor picnic area with magnificent views of the house, gardens, and the Green Mountains. There is also an indoor picnic pavilion. There is no charge for admission to the grounds, which are open from 9:30 to 5:30 each day. The Historic Area, for which an admission ticket is required, includes the Main House, the Gardens, the Gazebo, the Observatory, and the Lookout. In the Visitors' Center there is a theatre where a 12 minute slide presentation tells the story of the Lincolns in Vermont, a gift shop, an exhibit area, and rest rooms.

A scenic drive along River Road, past several elegant neighboring estates, brings the visitor to the Meadowlands part of the estate where many special events take place and where the restored 1832 Schoolhouse is located.

XI. What kind of special events are held at Hildene?

Annual events usually scheduled: Abraham Lincoln Birthday Tours, Horse Shows, Garden Party, Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Civil War Re-enactment, Fall Auction/Dinner, Holiday Candlelight Tours, Southern Vermont Craft Fair, Antique Show (even years), House Walk (odd years), Needlework Show, Terrace Dance, Night-At-The-Races. Call 362-1788 for further information.

XII. Can local groups make use of the property and buildings?

Local non-profit groups such as Lions, Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, etc. can use the facilities without charge. Private or commercial groups pay a rental fee. Cocktail parties may be scheduled for the house and dinners and other social events may be scheduled for the terrace.

XIII. Is the Garden being restored?

The formal garden at the Main House is one of our most significant restorations. We are grateful to the late Lila Acheson Wallace, co-founder with her late husband, DeWitt Wallace, of the Reader's Digest, for a major grant which is being used to authentically restore the garden and terrace. The views overlooking the Vermont valley between the Taconic mountains to the west and the Green Mountains to the east make this one of the most picturesque areas in southern Vermont.

XIV. What is the size of your budget?

Our operating budget for 1986 is about \$300,000. Of this, 58% comes from Visitors' Fees; 4% from the Ski Program; 10% from Special Events; 4% from rental of living space; 8% from Gift Shop profit; 7% from contributions; 9% from memberships. You will notice that 84% of this is "earned" income, only 16% is "donation" income. Five years ago these figures were reversed. Friends of Hildene is attempting to reach the point that is a goal for most non-profit groups; balance your operating budget with earned income and use the contributions for capital improvements, endowment, and expansion of services.

XV. How many people do you employ?

There are seven persons full-time year round. In the summer we add four or five part-time persons; in the winter some part-time help for skiing.

XVI. Do you have a volunteer program?

This is one of our most significant areas of program. We have over 200 volunteers - and the number is growing. They serve in all kinds of positions; docents (tour guides), hosts and hostesses at the Main House, office personnel, ski patrol, gift shop attendants, receptionists, garden workers, food booth operators, committee members, Board members, advisors, etc. We have a volunteer coordinator, an orientation program, and an annual Volunteer Recognition Reception.

Hildene could not operate without the Volunteer Corps - some of them who have served eight years as of 1985.

XVII. Are there any Hildene publications?

We have a Hildene souvenir booklet, made possible by Trustee Madeline Davidson, which is a beautiful 24-page story of the estate. We have also produced a recording of the 1908 Aeolian organ, both a cassette and a 33 rpm record. Recently, a delightful cookbook, "Hildene Hospitality - Then and Now" has been published.

Our most prestigious publication to date will be a 160 page commemorative history of the estate, with 200 photographs, to be published in the spring of 1987. This beautiful book is being underwritten by Miss Isabel Shults of New York City, one of Hildene's major benefactresses.



XVIII. Can you describe the Aeolian organ?

Installed in 1908, this is the oldest Aeolian Grand Organ with player attachment still in its original condition and still in use anywhere in the United States. There are 242 player rolls - all in mint condition. Friends of Hildene spent \$13,000 to completely restore the instrument in 1980 and it has a magnificent sound. It is played for every tour. Recently it was recorded with both live selections by Edwin Lawrence and favorite Lincoln family rolls.

XIX. Do you have an endowment fund?

Friends of Hildene has operated for its first eight years without benefit of an endowment. We have been in the black six out of eight years. Maintenance, however, is catching up with us and the earnings from an endowment would be welcome. A modest endowment fund was established in 1984 with \$10,000. During the next two years a special effort will be made to increase this fund dramatically.

XX. Does Hildene pay property taxes to Manchester?

Yes. Although we are a non-profit organization, we are not automatically tax exempt from local real estate taxes, under Vermont law, unless we go to the town and ask for an exemption. Taxes when we took over the property were about \$7,000 a year. We have met with the listers and have had these reduced to \$6,000, but we still pay this amount to the town and village each year. The Trustees have felt that when Hildene is at the point of contributing more significantly to the town through increased revenues from increased tourism, and in other ways, they will feel better about asking for a total exemption. Until then, we will continue to support the town by paying our fair share of the taxes.

XXI. Can I join Friends of Hildene?

Yes - and your support is needed. An individual membership starts at \$25 a year, a family at \$40. We have various levels of giving up to life members at \$5,000. Membership privileges include a quarterly Newsletter, "News From Historic Hildene," unlimited tours of the Main House, and Historic Area, free cross-country skiing, special events at no charge, such as the Holiday Candlelight Tours, organ concerts and the Southern Vermont Craft Fair, reduced admission fees at several Vermont museums, a 10% discount in the Gift Shop, and the feeling of satisfaction in helping to restore one of America's great estates.

For additional information about the development of the Hildene estate, you may call (802) 362-1788 any weekday from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

XXII. Is Hildene a member of any group or organization?

Yes: A. Manchester Chamber of Commerce  
B. Arlington Chamber of Commerce  
C. Bennington Chamber of Commerce  
D. Vermont State Chamber of Commerce  
E. National Trust for Historic Preservation  
F. American Association for State and Local History  
G. Manchester Historical Society  
H. Vermont Historical Society  
I. Illinois State Historical Society  
J. - and numerous Lincoln organizations throughout the country

XXIII. Does Hildene have a Long-Range Plan?

Yes. Adopted by the Trustees in December, 1985, the 12-page Plan - with specific goals and annual tasks - is now in place and serves as the basic document by which Friends of Hildene will be guided through 1990. Copies are available on request.

XXIV. I understand that there are two special events planned for 1986, the tenth anniversary of the founding of Friends of Hildene. What are they?

First of all, Hildene will be hosting the first National Symposium on the theme: "Abraham Lincoln and His Family." This will be held on the weekend of July 24, 25 and 26, 1986, at Hildene and in conjunction with the Equinox Hotel. For further details and registration information, please call Hildene, 362-1788.

Secondly, a grand celebration is being planned for August 23rd, 1986, the actual day ten years ago when Friends of Hildene was organized. Since this event is still in the planning stage, those interested are asked to call the Hildene office after March 1st, 1986.

Friends of Hildene  
Box 377  
Manchester, Vermont 05254  
(802) 362-1788

Printed January, 1986



cc: M. NEELY  
File

## Museum head will address Lincoln fans

Mark E. Neely Jr., director of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum in Fort Wayne, will deliver the keynote address at the Abraham Lincoln Family Symposium in Manchester, Vt.

The symposium — the first ever on the Lincoln family — is Thursday to Saturday at Hildene, the estate of Lincoln's oldest son, Robert Todd Lincoln.

Neely will discuss the record Robert Lincoln kept on the insanity trial of his mother, Mary Todd Lincoln, in 1875. The remarks will be based on his upcoming book, "The Insanity File: The Story of Mary Todd Lincoln," which is scheduled for publication in October.

The symposium also will feature presentations by several other nationally known Lincoln scholars and enthusiasts, as well as a Civil War encampment, survey rides through the estate and equestrian events.

# ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S *Hildene*



Thanksgiving, 1986

Dear Friend of Hildene:

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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*Chairman*

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We are pleased to enclose several items that we hope will interest you:

- Museum Gift Shop Catalogue

Recently revised, the catalogue lists a variety of articles suitable for gifts to friends and associates. A fine way to honor gift recipients and benefit Friends of Hildene.

- 1987 Special Events

Fresh from the Board Room, the first edition of the annual listing of special events for 1987.

- Cross-Country Ski brochure

Noting the 1986-1987 hours of operation, rates and fees. With luck (snow), we'll open December 20, 1986.

- 1986 Candlelight Tour

Announcing the dates and times of this increasingly popular event.

We are very grateful for the many ways you have shown your interest in this wonderful estate.

Sincerely,

Enc. (4)



- YEAR END FINANCIAL REPORT
- ELECTION OF TRUSTEES & ADVISORS
- REVIEW OF 1986
- OTHER BUSINESS .....





# Hildene



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## 1987 SPECIAL EVENTS

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**May 8, 9, 10** **NEEDLEWORK SHOW**  
**Friday, Saturday, Sunday**

Fourth Annual Show — over 150 entries expected. You may enter one or more of two dozen categories and also attend Friday, Saturday, or Sunday to view the handiwork. Nominal entry fee of \$5 per item. Admission to show: Adults \$3, youth 14 and under \$1, under 6 free.

**May 11** **OPENING DAY 1987\*\***  
**Monday**

The 1987 Tour Season begins at 9:30 a.m. 1987 Rates: Adults \$5, youth 14 and under \$2, under 6 free. Grounds open 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Last tour begins at 4:00 p.m. Open through Sunday, November 1.

**May 17** **BENNINGTON COUNTY DAY\*\***  
**Sunday**

Any resident of Bennington County receives free admission for House Tour! No reservations needed — just come over! 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**May 24** **BENNINGTON COUNTY**  
**Sunday** **HORSE SHOW**

On the Hildene Meadowlands along River Road. All day, beginning at 8:00 a.m. Nominal admission fee.

**June 14** **ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY**  
**Sunday**

The opening of the social season in Manchester! The seventh annual event in the restored formal gardens at the Main House. 1,000 peonies in bloom. Hors d'oeuvres, open bar, music. 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Advance reservations needed.

**June 20, 21** **POLO ON**  
**Saturday, Sunday** **THE MEADOWLANDS**

Usually the third week of the month throughout the summer at the Meadowlands on River Road. Nominal admission fee.

**July 3** **VERMONT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**  
**Friday** **POPS CONCERT**

Open air concert on the Meadowlands! 7:00 p.m. Come early and enjoy a picnic or a tailgate party! "Dining Car" open. Adults \$8, students \$5.

**July 15** **A NIGHT AT THE RACES**  
**Wednesday**

Third annual event — such fun that everyone wants to do it again! A night at the Saratoga harness track. Bus to and from the track, excellent buffet dinner, and program included. Price will be announced; call Hildene in the spring.

**July 18, 19** **POLO ON**  
**Saturday, Sunday** **THE MEADOWLANDS**

**July 31, August 1, 2** **SOUTHERN VERMONT**  
**Friday, Saturday, Sunday** **CRAFT FAIR**

The eighth year for this prestigious show, its fourth on the Hildene Meadowlands. 150 craft artists will be displaying and selling their work. Friday noon to 6 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Free to members on Friday only). Admission \$3 per person.

**August 7** **AN EVENING**  
**Friday** **ON THE TERRACE**

A full moon and dancing to the music of the big bands! A limited number of tickets will be sold; call Hildene after May 13 for ticket information.

**August 16** **MANCHESTER HORSE SHOW**  
**Sunday**

Starts at 8:00 a.m. and continues all day. A great show. On the Hildene Meadowlands along River Road. Nominal admission fee.

**August 22** **VILLAGE HOUSE WALK**  
**Saturday** **ON TACONIC AVENUE**

*\*\*These events are free to members.*

August 22, 23  
Saturday, Sunday

**POLO ON  
THE MEADOWLANDS**

September 19, 20  
Saturday, Sunday

**POLO ON  
THE MEADOWLANDS**

**Fall EVERLASTING DRIED FLOWER SHOW**  
First ever dried flower arrangement show. Call Hildene in the fall for details.

**October 25  
Sunday** **TOUR SEASON CLOSES\*\***

The last tour of the season begins at 3:00 p.m. on this Sunday.

**November 21  
Saturday** **CHAMPAGNE SUPPER  
AND AUCTION**

Last year's auction was sold out. This year's tickets will be limited to 150. Cocktails (cash bar) at 8:00 p.m. Auction begins at 8:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 10:00 p.m. at The Equinox. Advance reservations needed.

**December 19  
Saturday** **CROSS-COUNTRY  
SKI CENTER OPENS\*\***

If snow is there, the trails will be open. Warming hut, equipment rentals, and lessons. Trails are groomed. Open 7 days a week, 9:00 a.m. to dusk. Members ski free.

**December 27, 28, 29 CANDLELIGHT TOURS\*\*  
Sunday, Monday, Tuesday**

You arrive at the Carriage Barn and warm yourself with hot mulled cider and cookies. A horse-drawn sleigh takes you to the Main House which is decorated with a candle in every window and holiday decorations throughout — a magnificent sight! 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. each night. Adults \$5, 14 and under \$2, under six free. No reservations needed, but plan to arrive early!



*This information may vary slightly, and other activities will likely be added during the season. Please telephone to confirm dates and fees. (802) 362-1788*



**SPECIAL NOTES**

1. For the Garden Party and the Auction, where advance reservations are needed, please send a check to HILDENE, Box 377, Manchester, VT 05254. Receipt of your check confirms your reservations and your tickets will be held at the door. Reservations will be accepted beginning 60 days before an event.
2. The Hildene refreshment stand, the "Dining Car," will be open during all major events on the Meadowlands.
3. The Meadowlands area of the Hildene Estate is located along River Road, one mile south of Route 7A.

**MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES**

- ☆ Complimentary admission to Hildene's Historic Area (Main House, Gazebo, Observatory, Gardens and Overlook) during regular season.
- ☆ Free use of Hildene's extensive cross-country ski trails.
- ☆ The quarterly newsletter, *News From Historic Hildene*, mailed to your home.
- ☆ Complimentary admission to Candlelight Tours, and selected special events.
- ☆ Reduced admission to many Vermont museums.
- ☆ 10% discount at the Hildene Gift Shop.
- ☆ The satisfaction of supporting the restoration and development of one of America's great estates.

Yes, I want to be a member of FRIENDS of HILDENE, Inc. for the next 12 months. Enclosed is my membership contribution:

Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 or more
Benefactor	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000
Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Sustaining	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50
Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 or more

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to FRIENDS of HILDENE, Inc. and mail to P.O. Box 377, Manchester, VT 05254.



ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S *Hildene*



January, 1991

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Dear Friend:

Your interest in our past, present and future dreams has been most appreciated. It is, therefore, our pleasure to extend your complimentary membership in Friends of Hildene for the 1991 season.

We hope you will visit us when you can, and again enjoy the beauty and charm of this window to the past. Thanks to the financial support of many, our restoration and preservation efforts continue - always something different to see and experience.

You will continue to receive our newsletter, News From Historic Hildene. We've enclosed a 1991 calendar in hopes you can join us for one or more of the special events held at Hildene. We've taken the liberty of also including membership information - maybe you'll pass it along to a friend.

Again, thank you for your belief in Hildene.

Sincerely,

Oscar V. Johnson, Jr.  
Chairman

OVJ/bj

1991 HILDENE SPECIAL EVENTS

April 26	VOLUNTEERS' ORIENTATION AND RECEPTION
May 10, 11, 12	Needlework Show
May 13	OPENING DAY
May 19	Polo
May 26	Bennington County Horse Show
June 8 and 9	Antique and Classic Car Show
June 9	Garden Party
June 16	Polo
July 5	VSO Pops Concert
July 10	Night at the Races
July 12	Washington County Concert Band
July 14	Polo
July 19, 20, 21	Festival of Fools
July 27	Organ Concert/Dr. William Tortolano
August 1	Washington County Concert Band
August 2	Evening on the Terrace
August 2, 3, 4	Southern Vermont Crafts Fair
August 11	Polo
August 18	Manchester Horse Show
September 8	Polo
October 12	Country Auction
October 29	VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION
October 31	TOUR SEASON ENDS
November 1, 2, 3	Dried Flower Show
December 27, 28, 29	Candlelight Tours

\* \* \*

(Dates and events are subject to change. You may wish to confirm by calling Hildene (802)362-1788.)





ROBERT TODD LINCOLN'S  
*Hildene*  
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*Mark Kealy, Jr.*  
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DAVID C. SHELDON  
 Executive Director



Manchester, Vermont • (802) 362-1788







# THE EQUINOX



## *From The Beginning*

*Inns and Taverns have existed on the site of The Equinox House for over 200 years. From its beginning, Equinox House became the heart of Manchester, and spurred the growth of resort living in Vermont throughout its history.*

**1769**

Manchester was not quite 10 years old, consisting of a mere scattering of clear spots in the forest, when the first hotel was built on this site in 1769. This hotel was originally owned by William Marsh and kept by Martin Powell. It was at this inn that the Council of Safety met in 1772 and again for several days just prior to the Battle of Bennington in 1777.

A description of the inn is portrayed in a speech delivered by Loveland Munson at Music Hall, December 27, 1897.

*"It was a plain wooden building, less than two full stories, standing by the side to the road, in size not far from 50 by 45 feet. The ground floor consisted of two front rooms, extending from the south end of the building, and a pantry north of the kitchen. The main entrance was nearly in the center of the building, and opened into the south front room. From this room, a door opened into the kitchen, and in the south end of the kitchen was the stairway leading to the upper story. On this floor were two small rooms in the rear, a large front chamber in the south end of the building, and a small one in the north end. These were the scanty accommodations of an inn which often numbered among its guests the leading men of Vermont, and in which were enacted some of the most interesting scenes of her early history."*

**1772**

When the Council of Safety first met at Marsh Inn in 1772, William Marsh was devoted to the cause of the Americans. During Burgoyne's invasion, however, he became convinced that the British would be successful, and he turned Tory hoping to save his property. It is ironic that the proposal by Ira Allen (Ethan Allen's younger brother) to confiscate the property of the Tories for the purpose of organizing and equipping a regiment of the Green Mountain Boys was made at Marsh's Inn, and his the first property

seized. The suggestion of confiscation had never before been made, but the Continental Congress thereafter adopted it as a national policy.

**1777**

In 1777, Marsh fled to Canada. Three years later, Thaddeus Munson purchased Marsh Tavern and operated it until he built his new inn just north of the old. The frame of "Thaddeus Munson's New Inn" was erected by the town the same day Thomas Jefferson was inaugurated president, March 4, 1801.

**1784**

Also during this period the Village Green was beginning to take shape. The first Meeting House was built in 1784 at a location just north of the present Courthouse. Between 1787 and 1795, the first Courthouse was built directly across from Munson's Inn and formed the first building of what is now called "Equinox Junior." Evidence in the building indicated that the Courtroom was on the second floor, and had a suspended vaulted ceiling. The first floor was used as a tavern, and the basement held the jail.

**1807**

Until 1807, the Whipping Post stood directly across from what is now the Equinox House; the pillory occupied the site itself.

**1816**

Thaddeus Munson sold his tavern to Captain Peter Black in 1816, who enlarged the "new tavern" and demolished the old Marsh Inn to make room for a "barn and some sheds." After his death, his widow operated the inn, which is referred to in the records as "Widow Black's Inn."

## 1820

The 1820s brought further definitions of the Village Green. The present Courthouse was constructed in 1822, and in 1829, the First Congregational Church was built next to it on the site of the first Meeting House. The Schoolhouse was later built next to the church.

## 1830

By the 1830s, business in and around Manchester had developed to a point where a bank could be supported. The first bank opened in what is now the N. Keen & Company in 1832. Between the bank and Widow Black's Inn there were two stores: a one-story brick store operated by Levi Orvis, and a newer (1834) two-story brick store operated by Walter Shepard. Also in 1832, Levi Orvis built a "beautiful and substantial dwelling house with double parlors" between his store and the bank. Being in the mercantile and marble business, he began what would become over four miles of marble sidewalks throughout the Village by laying the first marble slab in front of his own house.

## 1839

During the 1830s James Pierce purchased Widow Black's Inn and sold it in 1839 to Martin Vanderlip. The Vanderlips demolished the sheds on the site of the old Marsh Inn and moved the barn to its present location where it would later become the "Garden Lounge." In place of the barn and sheds, Vanderlip added the large South Wing addition and the fluted columns.

## 1853

The third floor appears to have been added in 1854, putting the Vanderlips greatly in debt until they eventually sold the hotel to A. J. Gray, who renamed it the "Taconic." Taconic is the name of the mountain range to the west.

During this time (1841) Levi Orvis and Shepard traded stores. Shepard moved the Orvis store off the lot, leaving only the brick foundation and cellar stair stringers which can be seen in the basement of the Equinox. When his father died in 1849, Franklin Orvis closed the store, and after purchasing his father's house at auction, he began the hotel business by "taking summer paying guests into the old homestead."

"At first I did not succeed well with it," confided Mr. Orvis to a report of the Rutland Daily Herald who published a story on August 3, 1897. "After two seasons, I decided to double my prices and give more to the guests, and so I have been going on."

The trend for superior accommodations at the Equinox House was set. As demand for rooms increased, so did Orvis' hotel operation. He added a third floor and covered the bricks with clapboards to model the architecture of the old homestead. West of the General Store, he built a three-story addition to accommodate more guest rooms on the upper two floors. The main floor of the General Store became the hotel office. Between the General Store and the homestead he built a two-story connecting link to tie the two buildings together. Originally, the square columns along the center section of the facade stopped just above the doorways. A common second-floor balcony stretched between the end sections accessible from the second-floor guest rooms.

In the attic of the old homestead, is evidence of two earlier chimneys no longer in use. The northwestern one probably was used by the kitchen of the homestead. The other one, on the southeast section, indicates the first floor was remodeled to allow for the large "North Parlor."

It appears that it was possible during this renovation period that the fireplace and marble mantel dated 1832 was added by Franklin to commemorate his father and the year Levi built the house. The foundation of the fireplace and its present location indicate that it probably was not part of Levi Orvis' house plan. Also in the attic are remains of an earlier stairway beneath the existing one. It is not certain whether the original Orvis homestead had the current box-like ventilator or in fact had a pitched roof as was more common for Vermont residences of that period.

## 1854

With the construction outlined above completed, Franklin Orvis opened the "Equinox House" in June, 1853.

Ten years later, the Equinox was well established as a primary summer resort. Mrs. Abraham Lincoln visited with her two sons in 1863. The following summer, she visited again, this time taking rooms 50 and 51 over the North Parlor on the third floor. Robert Lincoln was assigned to room 20 on the second floor. It is not absolutely certain that Robert Lincoln actually came to Manchester in 1864 due to correspondence found between the President and Mrs. Lincoln during the same period. It is known, however, that Robert Lincoln eventually made his home in Manchester at "Hildene."

Before leaving, Mrs. Lincoln made a reservation for the following summer, this time with the President. The rooms Mrs. Lincoln occupied during her previous visit of 1863 were refurbished to make the entire second floor wing over the lounge suitable as a Presidential Suite. Unfortunately, President Lincoln was assassinated a few months before his visit. Nevertheless, the rooms remain as "The Lincoln Suite."

During the 1860s summer business boomed. The Manchester Hotel opened across the road on the corner of Union Street and what is now Route 7. (This would later become the northernmost section of Equinox Junior.) The first floor of the Manchester Hotel contained a drug store and the Manchester "Water-Cure" rooms of Dr. L.H. Sprague.

Next to the Manchester Hotel, the Vermont Hotel had developed from the first Courthouse Building built on that site by 1794. The Vermont Hotel apparently comprised the middle two sections of what is now Equinox Junior.

## 1866

In 1866, Franklin Orvis purchased the Vermont Hotel, added the Seth Lyons house to it, probably added the Victorian veranda at that time, and opened it as "Equinox Junior."

Franklin Orvis made every effort to give his guests the absolute best in summer resort living. In 1868, he built the Music Hall to accommodate the arts. The main floor was built as a two-story high theater with a stage at the south end. The lower floor contained a four-lane bowling alley on one side, and a large public room on the other. The top floor was reserved for staff housing. The roof over the front steps is a later addition.



## 1870

When the Congregational Church across the street was falling into disrepair (1870) Orvis persuaded the church to build its new building as far north on the lot as possible, so as not to block his guests' view. Later he was able to get the schoolhouse removed as well, opening the view for his porch-sitters further. 1870 also brought the new railroad and more guests. The first convention was that of the Vermont Editors and Publishers in 1871.

## 1880

By 1880, Orvis had built Equinox Pond for the exclusive enjoyment of his guests, for fishing or as a place to "drive." Dormitories were built to house coachmen.

## 1883

Orvis bought the Taconic Hotel across what was then upper Union Street in 1883 and advertised "the Dining Room has been enlarged...the Taconic purchased, refitted, refurnished and connected to the Main House." For recreation, he advertised "Lawn Tennis, Archery, Croquet Ground, Billiard Tables, Bowling Alleys, and Music afternoon and evening." The Equinox House also advertised that it was "supplied with the best and purest water, and a new and perfect system of drainage construction since last Spring."

## 1887

In 1887, the Equinox House advertised several new bathrooms "which are all supplied with splendid mountain water and are a great luxury to the guests."

By this time, the third floor had been added to the center section of the Main House and the porch columns raised to their current height, matching those of the end sections. A fourth floor had been added over the sections west of the main office. The western addition to the central wing had been added over the sections west of the main office. The western addition to the central wing had been added prior to this time due to construction techniques. The first addition to the southernmost wing appears to have been built between 1887 and 1912. When President Taft visited in 1912, the facade was nearly identical to its present condition except the cornices all had railings on the top of them.

## 1913

In the spring of 1913, another extensive building program began: A floor was added in the theater portion of the Music Hall, converting it to guest rooms and a bridge was built at this new second-floor level connecting it to Equinox Junior.

That same year, the Main House was remodeled. The basement was remodeled to include a Men's Smoking Room, a Barber Shop, new toilet rooms, a new Billiard Room, an English Buffet Room and some new staff rooms. The first floor Main Lobby was enlarged to include a Ladies' Waiting Room. What appears to have been the old kitchen, an earlier addition, was converted into staff quarters. The Main Dining Room, which had been enlarged two previous times, was converted to a Ballroom. West of the Ballroom, a new Dining Room with its vaulted ceiling and large bay window was built in connection with a new masonry kitchen.

A fireplace was added to the "Gentlemen's Lounging Room" and

a new terrace was added. The terrace was later replaced with the current larger one. The new terrace was later enclosed.

## 1916

The southernmost wing of what was the Taconic has had two additions. In 1916, the latter addition was completed, which added a fourth floor to the 1887-1912 addition and a new four-story block of guest rooms added to the far west. The elevator was added to this section in 1965, apparently the same time that the foundation repair work began.

Franklin Orvis died in 1900, leaving the property to his sons. George Orvis bought his brother's share, built the above mentioned addition and operated the Equinox until his sudden death in 1918. Mrs. Orvis continued to run the hotel until 1921 when she sold the controlling interest of all Equinox property, except Equinox Springs Company to Mrs. V.H.P. Brown of New York. By 1923, however, Mrs. Orvis was back in control.

## 1920

The Equinox Springs Company bottled the water until 1920. Not only did the water add to the popularity of the Equinox House, but became a base for various soft drinks. The Ginger Ale made from the water was exceptionally well liked, its recipe a well-guarded secret. In 1927, the bottling works was turned into a dormitory for waiters.

Mrs. Orvis, as leading stockholder and president of the Equinox Company, needed to find new ways to increase the number of guests visiting each summer.

## 1925

Manchester had been advertising itself as the "Center of Summer Golf" since the Ekwanok Country Club opened in 1900. By 1925, it was evident that the course could not accommodate all who wished to play there. In July of 1925, the Equinox Company began construction of a new 18-hole course designed by Walter Travis. By 1926, there were but five courses in all of Vermont, and two of them lay side-by-side at the front steps of the Equinox House.

## 1928

In 1928, a complete fire sprinkler system was installed in all areas of the Equinox House, including foundation and attics, except in the Main Lobby. The Equinox Company also developed an airport for Manchester, and a skeet field north of Equinox Pond. These were heavy expenses just before a national Depression: In 1938, the Equinox Company filed for bankruptcy and was dissolved.

## 1938

In order to protect the welfare of the Village, a group of citizens took over the declining hotel and leased it to Arthur E. Langdon of Massachusetts, and A. Rea Ball of Connecticut. Langdon withdrew from active participation in 1939, and Ball took over, making Franklin Hodgkins manager of the hotel.

## 1953

On June 1, 1953, Ball leased the Equinox property for 10 years to John J. Dewey of St. Petersburg, Florida. In 1953, John Dewey

opened the swimming pool east of the Garden Lounge, which had recently been remodeled from Munson's barn, moved there by the Vanderlips in 1839. Later he added the Lodge Building and the Villas to accommodate more guests. The Laundry Building and the old Ice House west of the new kitchen were demolished, and a new Convention Hall built near that location.

## 1963

At the end of Dewey's lease, the property came under the ownership of RKO General, Inc., a subsidiary of General Tire, in March of 1963. The office building was included in the sale, thereby making the office building part of the Equinox property. Before renovation as the Equinox House year-round offices, the structure house, the post office and a hardware store, the upper floors were used for apartments.

## 1968

Part of the Orvis Inn had been built as a residence by 1869, but became a part of the Equinox property when RKO purchased it in 1968. The Orvis Inn first opened as an inn when Charles Orvis bought the house the same year his brother Franklin bought the Taconic Hotel, 1883. Charles enlarged the house to its present size, excluding the basement, and opened it for summer borders. It remained in the Charles Orvis family, still operating only in the summer until 1937, when Mrs. George Orvis leased the property to run during the winter. The Orvis Inn became one of the first to accommodate skiers.

## 1972

In May of 1972, Ian Bennett purchased all of the Equinox property. Shortly after the purchase, a visiting engineer convinced Bennett the Orvis Inn was structurally unsafe, causing it to be closed abruptly in 1972. On November 21, 1972, the Equinox House was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Without adequate maintenance funds, however, the Equinox fell further into disrepair. Hot water was sometimes not available on the third floor. No longer would guests be content to share bathrooms, thereby cutting in half the available rentable rooms.

## 1973

The Equinox floundered through the summer of 1973 when the Chemical Bank of New York was forced to foreclose on the property. Orvis Inn construction was stopped abruptly. The hotel closed, its furnishings sold at an auction.

The closing of the Equinox House had a strong negative impact on Manchester Village. The boutique shops and the ice cream parlor also were forced to close without the Equinox House providing many of their customers.

## 1974

Francesco Galesi assumed the first mortgage in 1974, and became owner of the property with the hopes that it could one day be re-opened. The Equinox Corporation was organized to manage the golf course and maintain security for the Equinox structure.

## 1985

After years of careful planning and an extensive \$20 million

restoration, the resort reopened year-round in 1985.

## 1991

With its April 1991 purchase by Equinox Resort Associates — a partnership of Guinness Enterprise Holdings (Vermont), Inc., Callaghan & Partners, Ltd., and The Galesi Group — The Equinox began an ambitious revitalization program designed to make it the premier resort destination in the Northeast once again. To reach this goal, Phase I and Phase II of the redevelopment program, including a complete rebuild of the 18-hole, championship-quality golf course and restoration of the historic hotel, were completed for a June 1992 reopening. Planned future phases of the redevelopment include the club house, spa and surrounding grounds.

The 65-year old Walter Travis golf course was completely rebuilt and returned to its original Scottish tradition by golf course architect Rees Jones, at a cost of \$3.3 million. It has also been renamed The Gleneagles Golf Course at The Equinox after its sister property in Scotland.

The \$9 million restoration of the hotel returned The Equinox to its former "country grand" splendor. It encompasses all guest bedrooms and baths, lobby, Marsh Tavern, meeting and public spaces and main dining room.

## 1995

The Charles Orvis Inn at the Equinox was restored and open for guests, after having been closed for more than three decades. Purchased in 1883 by Charles Orvis, the site's original house dated to 1812. The 1995 restoration by Equinox Resort Associates offers great attention to detail. Each of the nine suites features stereo, TV and VCR's in gracious living areas and bedrooms, cherry paneled kitchens, oak flooring and working gas fireplaces. The Billiard and Conference Rooms are elegantly appointed.

In the September of 1995, the Equinox opened the British School of Falconry, the first of its' kind in the U.S.A. Guests can experience the thrill of a lifetime with a magnificent hawk flying at their command. Each program offered by the school is a "hands on" lesson, teaching you to handle and fly native birds of prey.

## 1997

In April, 1997, the Land Rover Driving School at The Equinox opened. The first 4 x 4 driving school in the U.S. under the tutelage of a team of Land Rover North America's expert instructors, students have the option of driving on mountain logging trails or on a purpose-built driver training course.

## 1998

The resort's regulation size croquet court and volleyball court are available for seasonal play.

The resort is the first in Vermont to offer guided snowmobile tours.



VERMONT  
- WINCHESTER  
- HILDEBRAND

1 OF 2

DRAWING (2A)

OTHER STATES

